THE COMMONWEAL

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AMERICA ANSWERS ROME

THERE is a prayer in the Mass of Passion Sunday that is of special appropriateness in connection with the unique and splendid coöperation of those Protestants, Jews and Catholics who will gather together in the Radio City Music Hall next Sunday to unite their prayers and good-will as Pope Pius XI inaugurates the Holy Year in Rome. It is the Gradual prayer, which prepares the way for the Gospel of the day, and it runs as follows:

"Deliver me, O Lord, from my enemies; teach me to do Thy will—my deliverer, O Lord, from the angry nations. Thou wilt lift me up above them that rise up against me: from the unjust man Thou wilt deliver me."

On the common ground of belief in God, drawn together by apprehensions of the anger of nations throughout the world which threaten the peace of the world, facing the powerful and organized forces of those who deny and mock at all forms of religious belief, well may our American religious people, whether Jewish or Protestant or Catholic, unite their wills, and attempt to stem the rising tides of prejudice, and persecution, and immorality, and materialism, which have already worked such havoc in society and which so gravely imperil the future.

It is in response to an invitation extended by His Eminence Patrick Cardinal Hayes that prominent leaders of many religious faiths are to join with him in this public celebration of the beginning of the year of universal penance, reparation, self-sacrifice and petition decreed by Pope Pius XI. President Roosevelt will speak to the mass meeting in Radio City, it is hoped, in person, if it is possible for him to leave his arduous duties at Washington, or by radio. His voice and the voice of the other speakers will be broadcast between the hours of eleven and noon, and will be heard in Rome. A great and splendid echo of the Pope's plea that the power of prayer shall be used in this hour of supreme social crisis—and more than an echo: for it is the authentic and spontaneous utterance of the soul of America. For that soul is innately religious. In spite of all the laxity and positive infidelity which have grown to such monstrous proportions of late years, the true spirit of the people of the United States is God-fearing, and God-loving, and the strong faith of the founding fathers still abides in millions of their descendants.

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University, an Episcopalian, Henry Morgenthau, a Jew, and Morgan J. O'Brien, a Catholic, the arrangements for the meeting are being made by an executive committee headed by the Most Reverend John J. Dunn, Auxiliary Bishop and Vicar General of the Archdiocese of New York, assisted by Grover Whalen, George J. Atwell, and J. J. McCarthy. There will be music by the Paulist Choir, and famous soloists. The addresses and the music will not only be heard in Rome but also will be broadcast to South Africa and Australia, thus encircling the world from New York with this coöperation in spiritual things of representatives of all the great religious and civic forces of the United States.

Surely the times demand the application of a force more fundamental and far-reaching even than the best plans of statesmen or economists.

"The critical international situation continues as heretofore, a situation rendered uncertain, uneasy and disquieting by reciprocal mistrust, by conflicting interests, by inadequate and frequently contradictory measures proposed and attempted by exaggerated and unjust nationalism—than which nothing is more contrary to that brotherhood of men and peoples which can find its vital roots healthy and can find satisfying nourishment only in the dictates, inspirations and practice of Christian charity."

This is the statement of Pope Pius XI, the central thought of his recent allocution, or address, to the cardinals of the Catholic Church, in which he again drew attention to the fact that the doctrines of the Church are the strongest foundations and the surest bulwark of our threatened civilization. They can support even those who do not subscribe to their deepest religious sense; for they are the bed-rock of Western civilization. Let us turn again to the words which best describe the nature of the spiritual forces invoked by the Pope, and so heartily supported by men and women of many forms of faith. Again we quote from the Pope's allocution:

"Since this great Jubilee and Holy Year of the Redemption of mankind, recently promulgated by Us, is meant to be and with God's grace will be, a year of greater expiation and remission of sins, of seeking and practising justice in every department of Christian life, for this reason We cherish full and certain confidence that it will be especially, above all, a year of spiritual exaltation for the whole Christian world and for all mankind; and secondly, a relief, which God grant may be an entire cessation, from the hardships and miseries with which the world is still sorely afflicted. The first result, a spiritual raising up of hearts and minds, will be brought about by grateful remembrance and meditation on the Redemption of man, consummated in the Death and Blood of a God Who came down among men and was the Teacher and Model of every virtue. The second, the beneficent relief, will be obtained from Divine Mercy by the universal concert of prayers and good works, were it only by drawing down the necessary light and still more necessary concord upon conferences and conversations that will take place precisely during this Holy Year for world economic readjustment, for disarmament—may it be effective materially and morally—and for war debts. For all these intentions We propose to pray every day and We invite everyone to do so with Us."

And, again: "The economic crisis still continues throughout the world, and it is the weakest who suffer most; innocent children, first and delicate blossoms of life; the infirm, already afflicted and now in greater need; aged folk, already worn out and often broken by their long journey. There is the material and moral suffering of thousands and millions of workingmen and artisans, who are deprived not merely of wages earned in justice and with dignity, but also and especially of work, and are reduced to unemployment with all its perils and temptations, to say nothing of the cost of the difficulties and anxieties that fall upon society in general and upon those in whose hands rests responsibility for public order and security.

"There is, however, one class of men who derive advantage, sad advantage, from general hardship and misery, the enemies of all political, social and religious order. War on human society, on religion, on God Himself—that is their well-known program. No less well known are their subversive, murderous principles. Occurrences of recent, very recent, date show how capable, how determined, they are to translate these principles into acts. What has been happening this long time and is still happening throughout the huge expanses of unhappy Russia, in Mexico, in Spain, and lately in small countries and large in Central Europe, shows only too clearly what may and must be feared wherever their nefarious propaganda and influence penetrate. . . .

"We cease not, and We shall not cease, to raise Our voice for truth, justice and humanity, for the very salvation and well-being of countries and peoples, but still more for the proclamation and defense of the rights of God and the rights of consciences and souls entrusted to the universal fatherhood God has committed to Us. It is precisely from this universal fatherhood that We draw inspiration and invite all countries, all nations, with so many deplorable instances before them, to consider what serious moral, intellectual and even material disaster is inevitably being prepared wherever the Church is openly or covertly combated, hampered and opposed in her mission of sanctification and formation, especially among young people."

To this voice, the great chorus of supporting voices of affirmation, representing all religious faiths, to arise from New York on Sunday, April 2, and to encircle the globe, is an answer which well may prove to be the forerunner of the answer of the world itself. But those voices must not rely merely upon words uttered for other men to hear—important as it is to bear witness publicly—for the chief reliance must be upon those words meant only for God to hear which rise from the prayers of the heart and the soul.

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WEEK BY WEEK

MR. ROOSEVELT has had his "honeymoon" and enjoyed it thoroughly. The nation even yet rubs its eyes, finding quite incredible the news that a severe and painful bank holiday has led to increased confidence in the financial system, that the ground has been prepared for economy measures designed to balance the budget as far as that is necessitated by common sense, and that the prohibition problem has been solved to the extent that the federal government can solve it under the Constitution as now amended. These are notable and glorious beginnings. They indicate that the nation as a whole responds as does a ship when there is knowledge and energy at the wheel. But—as has often been observed—we Americans are become a curious lot. We bob up and down in the waters of pessimism-optimism as does a fisherman's cork when a canny perch is toying with the hook. It is therefore well to remember, for obvious psychological reasons, that all is not yet rosy. Up to the present more than a third of the banking institutions of some states have not been reopened; and many doubt whether even reorganization will save some of them from collapse. More important still is the fact that human nature has not changed, in the opinion of any authority with whom we have conversed, and that in politics human nature expresses itself as "interests." The pressure of these upon Congress is bound to become speedily evident, and we shall then be able to see how far ideals of national reconstruction will carry.

At the End of Two Weeks

NEWS that comes to us from Europe these days is not merely news, but also a rapid-fire commentary on processes of profound social and intellectual importance. It is as if the priceless treasure of liberty, to define and possess which half the battles of history have been waged, were being found valueless in comparison with something else half prescribed by necessity and half longed for by curious desires latent in the human soul. To quote from a thoughtful essay by Ramon Fernandez: "When one takes the trouble to look at the face of the cards, one sees that the suppression of parliamentary democracy in post-war Europe always takes place as a result of a tacit agreement between masters and masses, according to which the masters obtain, in exchange for a 'mysticism' which exacts very great sacrifices in the order of morality and intelligence, an unconditional authority which permits carefully weighed decisions and rapid execution. But this very exchange burdens the authority of the masters with a terrible limitation —the renouncement of all liberty of mind and character outside the narrow bounds of the 'mysticism' agreed upon. A real aristocrat of blood or mind cannot help seeing in this pact the worst kind of slavery." Compare the Europe envisaged (however imperfectly) by Count Keyserling with the Europe preached by Hitler or even Mussolini, and the difference is obvious. One can say of assorted fascisms that they permit solutions of social and economic problems upon which the well-being of the masses depends, but that is all one can say of them. Napoleon's rule did not crush but actually evoked the full creative vigor of German thought and vision; the logical result of Hitler's is Dr. Frick and Professor Schulze-Naumburg.

Whither Europe?

WHAT we are up against is the bitter need of the great masses. In an interesting letter written by Wilhelm II to Mr. T. St. John Gaffney, we read that unemployment cannot (in the opinion of the former Kaiser) be halted by stopping machines or assuming that a rebirth of prosperity will remove the threat of joblessness. It is therefore the primary duty of the state, the Kaiser writes, to provide new forms of work and to care adequately for those who, through no fault of their own, are idle. This would seem to be the veriest common sense, when viewed either from a Christian or a humanitarian point of view. But it is precisely this duty which the modern liberal "state of interests" finds it impossible to perform. The various active and propertied groups cannot agree upon a program which must be onerous to themselves. Their "rugged individualism" permits of a certain amount of supervision, but perishes in the grip of a "plan." Accordingly the distressed masses become vocal; and when they do their own ideology necessarily finds expression. Nor is this wholly a new phenomenon. Many a likeness exists between Hitler in the twentieth century and Jack Cade in the seventeenth. But the first can succeed because of unemployment. And having succeeded, they almost automatically establish not merely a new political economy but also a new culture.

WHAT happens to public welfare work in the lees of a great depression is so well known to us all by now that there is a temptation to change the subject when fresh statistics are mentioned. Those who have contributed to this or that project for social salvage until they can contribute no more, tend, perhaps naturally, to feel that their usefulness is ended, at least temporarily, and that it is morbid to dwell upon losses which they cannot help to recoup. But surely this is a mistake. The established forms of public welfare deal with society's permanent problems; we shall all have to take them up again in full strength in the future, even though some of us must lay them down now—and meanwhile, keeping informed, intelligently and without panic or despair, of developments, even though they are largely told by losses, is a valuable contribution to social-mindedness. For this reason, we suggest that our readers give a moment or two to the recent meeting in New York of the superintendents of correctional institutions for girls and women, as well as to Commissioner Mul-

Two More Reports

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rooney's just-published report of crime statistics and police work in the metropolis for 1932. The former call our attention to the fact that there are now perhaps 150,000 girls and women "on the road," and report a large increase in institution inmates because of broken homes, diminished funds for reformative work and shrinkage of the paying jobs which make paroles possible. This serious picture is balanced, to some extent, by the police report, which notes a decrease in gang activity and violent crime and an increase in effective police work, arrests and serious convictions. It likewise notes, alas, an increase in juvenile offenders; but this may be fairly offset, we think, by the very recent growth in scope and effectiveness of the fine Crime Prevention Bureau, which is the apple of our remarkable commissioner's eye. With more and more policemen becoming the friends, unofficial guardians and athletic advisers of wild young boys, we are perhaps entitled to feel that not all developments are told by losses, and that, even in the lees of this depression, the New York Police, as social agents, are more than holding their own.

The Centenary of Oxford

DURING 1833 there began that movement to restore the vigor of the Church of England which we associate with Oxford, though Cambridge was not unaffected and took a part. Even today it is not utterly a thing of the past, though most of those who were acquainted with Newman have gone to their reward. The effects upon the Establishment remain, and English Catholicism still makes converts who without Oxford would never have found their way into the Church. It is, therefore, somewhat alarming that the centenary does not seem to evoke the spirit of thanksgiving and humble remembrance, but rather an acrid controversialism lacking, one thinks, in due regard for Divine grace. For that Providential goodness was active in this great work, even when the results were not everything that might have been wished, appears incontrovertible to anybody who sees that the fruits were not merely brilliant thinking and increased regard for unprejudiced history but also holiness, fortitude and penitential humility. Does it in any sense "pay" to deny that the Established Church was enriched and sanctified—that Isaac Williams was a just man, that in Pusey the central splendor of the English theological tradition reappeared, and that Christina Rossetti was the peer of Alice Meynell? It was Patmore who said that the sermons of Keble were more Catholic than the sermons of Newman; and though the poet may here be fairly accused of succumbing again to the delights of paradox, the sound core of his remark—that Keble's was a Catholic mind, to be dealt with reverently—abides.

IT IS the tragedy of such great spiritual upheavals to arrive ultimately at relative institutionalized rest. On the one hand, the Oxford Movement has left a firmly built extreme Anglo-Catholicism, which is content with its own routine and formulae to an extent no longer fully compatible with openness of mind and unprejudiced searching. Those who belong to it appear quite right when they say that "out and out" Anglo-Catholics seldom "surrender to Rome"—that it is only the moderate who follow Newman. But on the other hand there is also a certain anti-Anglo-Catholicism which, for one reason or another, no longer adequately realizes that it, too, may be trusting the intellect and the institution where it should be taking refuge in the spirit of God. Yet while musing on these things and regretting them, ought we not also to deplore the waning of all regard for the historical continuity of the Oxford Movement in the United States? The history of that has not been written, let alone remembered. It is the fate of so much that has been fine in American Catholicism to have been writ in water—or rather to resemble the leaven that is not kneaded into the dough but left to dry on the stove by an absent-minded cook. This year should not go by until we have resolved once again to make use of Newman as a force for the spiritualizing of our culture, and to realize that while we are doing that we are joining hands with our own forefathers.

After Word

THE LAST word of John Galsworthy comes after his death, in some essays just published under the title "Candelabra" (Scribner's). If these considered opinions and mature comments of the distinguished novelist have a vogue in our country even approaching that of his novels, they will be a valuable legacy at a timely moment. For much of their preoccupation is with the evanescence of literary fame and the unteachableness of literary art. He suggests how different it is for a novelist to be a fashion and to be a classic so pointedly that one cannot escape the conviction that he was thinking about himself; and though his random list of candidates for permanence—"a 'Tess,' an 'Esther Waters,' a 'Mr. Polly,' a 'Babbitt,' an 'Ethan Frome,' an 'Old Wives' Tales,' a 'Reynard the Fox' "—delicately omits any of his own titles, he must have been wondering hard which one he would have included if he had had the manners of Bernard Shaw. Would it have been "Justice"? "The Man of Property"? Or one of the later, kindlier and, to say the truth, flatter presentations of life over which those of the judicious who like their irony strong and bitter have been found occasionally grieving?

THESE are interesting questions, but the real gold for America comes in the second point: that writing cannot be taught, that the writer is born, not made, that the true and only schoolmaster of the novelist is "life itself." If there were pasted on the bulletin-board of every Workshop and every class in Novel-structure and Plot Complication these words: "The power of construction is also inborn. The power of poignant

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expression is inborn; it cannot be acquired, it can only be improved"—there might begin that chastening and winnowing, that decrease of magazine racks and lending libraries, and increase of housewives and market gardeners, which we must have soon if we are to keep the race going, and not strangle betimes on thin cleverness or thick drool. And even those who never quite forgave Galsworthy for the last stretches of the "Forsyte Saga" would once more bless his name.

The Sempiternal Mr. Bean

A DELIGHTFUL play which has captured Broadway this year tells of the posthumous fame of a poor devil of a painter. Living, he could repay kindness only with unwanted canvases; years later those canvases are rescued from various places of ignoble oblivion to be sold for a fortune. To any American who may have regretted that the play, which is a sparkling social study, full of native atmosphere, is not homegrown (it has been translated, with amazing art, from the French), there can now be offered the comfort that the story itself is homegrown. There are variations of detail, of course, but for all of that, the parallel between Christopher Bean and George Catlin, the famous painter of Indians, is very close according to a fragment of the latter's biography just made public by one of his rueful beneficiaries, now the Mayor of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. It appears that many years ago the artist had his quarters in an old tower attached to the Smithsonian Institution. Here he worked, by the kindness of the Institution's secretary, pending the purchase of his paintings by the government: worked in obscurity and ill health, and in poverty so great that he sometimes had no money at all. During these lean periods, he used to give the boy who brought up his meals a tip in kind—a canvas instead of a coin. The urchin set no store by them, though they were pictures of Indians, and when leaving to make his fortune, he simply stowed them under the stairway of the tower. We skip fifty years, and observe the mayor of a great Western city returning to the scene of his childish labors. He makes the round of the picture gallery, much expanded since his time; he dimly recognizes one picture—then another and another. Can it be? These canvases hanging in places of honor—they were in the dingy roll he abandoned under the stairs! It is even on record that he asked incredulously, "Are they worth anything?", paving the way for the reply that makes the story complete.

The Arbiter of the *Times*

ADOLPH S. OCHS, presiding genius of the New York *Times,* recently celebrated his seventy-fifth birthday. THE COMMONWEAL is among his many well wishers. We have long, together with several hundred thousand people throughout the world, appreciated the reliable thoroughness and honesty of the newspaper which Mr. Ochs built up. It is undoubtedly one of the most stable and stabilizing institutions in the United States. There is nothing cranky about it; it avoids bitter partizanship, and it has a fine, high-minded regard for the decent humanities. The very extent of the *Times'* circulation is a reassurance that callowness and vulgarity and superficial opinions, though they can appeal to a large section of the public, are far from sovereign. Mr. Ochs, besides being a man of irreproachable integrity, is also, without ostentation, a deeply religious man. His human consideration and justice which find their reflection in his paper, we can believe, have their roots in a spiritual sense of values that is superior to mere day-by-day expediencies.

CATHOLICS IN POLITICS

THERE exists a fundamental human anomaly which in times like the present is too frequently overlooked. It may be described thus: man's acts are always directed toward moral ends (either positive or negative) and governed by moral intents; but man's knowledge, or science, is in the absolute sense amoral because it strives to answer its favorite question, "What will happen if—?", by ruling out all arbitrary and subjective factors. Suppose we try to restate this verity in terms of social action. John Jones wishes to build a new factory in order to give employment to a number of people out of work. This estimable resolve by no means guarantees the success of the factory. That is dependent upon a number of things which can be determined only by economic science in so far as that is in a position to predict with assurance. Or again: reduction of interest on indebtedness may seem to be desirable, but the probable consequences of such a reduction are necessarily economic and therefore independent of ethical intent. At first sight this may seem to imply that the universe is indifferent to our moral urges. A little reflection will show rather that the conscience of man must not presume to be creative of reality in any way. We are sure that God's world permits following the law written upon the human heart. But this following cannot be whimsical or wilful. It exacts faithful treading in each and every cosmic groove. It implies, in short, accepting the world as it is.

The consequences for Catholic Action are several. In all ages the Church has upheld without flinching its claim to be the moral guide of mankind. Where there is debating about ethical standards or aims, there the teaching authority bequeathed by Christ is the final arbiter. But Catholicism has never asserted that knowledge of how desirable individual or social objectives can be attained, was its to dispense. As a matter of fact, such a claim has been officially repudiated by it. This attitude is dictated not merely by the silence of Revelation. It is due also to the realism, the respect for reality, which characterizes the Catholic mind.

No amount of enthusiasm for papal encyclicals or for the doctrine upon which these repose can, therefore, dispense with a clear regard for facts or conclu-

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sions deducible from them. One may issue the most grandiose pictures imaginable of a world in which the lion is purring beside the lamb; but without sober, practical directions as to how to make the dream come true, the total effect given may be akin to what Mr. Smith frankly terms "bolony." Without stressing the point further, we wish to make some comment upon what is probably the best-known organization for Catholic social action in the world—the German Center party.

Americans in particular have come to have the greatest admiration for this party. It has shirked none of the responsibilities of government; and as the advocate of a sound, moderate and nobly idealistic progressivism, it seems to us in this country to have won its best laurels in going down temporarily to defeat. One may criticize its attitude on this or that question. One may even legitimately wonder whether the association of religion with politics does not tend, in a society driven hither and thither by political emotions, to undermine the spiritual work of the Church. Some have said—and they are not the worst of the Germans—that a priest might far better be employed in the ministry of Christ than in this or that ministry of his country. About such things there is room for discussion. But the fact remains that the Center party, tested and educated by more than sixty years of struggle, has taken a Catholic social program and attempted to find practical ways of putting it into effect.

It has, for example, victoriously unified differing groups of Catholics. In its councils representatives of labor sit side by side with representatives of industry, agriculture and the professions. Even more important has been its ability as a group to grow out of merely opportunistic categories. The great temptation which besets all organizations sponsoring a view of life is, no doubt, the fatal easiness of subordinating all to the "defense" of one thing. Sometimes there was real danger lest the Center party might fail here, as other German group parties had failed. But the development of strong academic and professional organizations which possessed journals of opinion had a very beneficent effect upon Catholic thought. A social theory based on the great encyclicals was formulated in a spirit of awareness of the hour. Nevertheless Centrist leaders always remained conscious of the fact that they were supported only by a minority group, and that therefore nothing could be accomplished without readiness to coöperate, and if need arose compromise, with others. That the party could insist stubbornly on fundamental principles is proved by its unflinching advocacy of religious education, and by its refusal to assent to a Hitler government unless the existing institutions of social welfare were respected. But it was nearly always more than ready to bow to political facts and to work hand in hand with other parties with the help of which alone Germany could be governed.

At first sight it must now seem as if this long-continued Catholic effort has failed. The position into which the Center party has been maneuvered by events is one of minority resistance to a "new order" of events. Many names identified with the history of post-war Germany are now no longer prominent. Even so eminent a personage as Dr. Adenauer, Mayor of Cologne, has been replaced by a National-Socialist nonentity. A populist revolution, comparable in many ways to what Bryanism would have been had it succeeded after 1896, has swept Germany from end to end, so that it is useless to predict what the immediate future will be like. But these fierce uprisings are merely political vicissitudes. Temporary freedom from responsibility will enable the Center party to lie fallow for a time, and to derive new strength from the rest. And when ultra-nationalistic emotions have died down again and the frenzy created by dire need has abated, Germany will once more be ready for constructive effort according to sound political and social tradition.

What is the value of this German experience for ourselves? It seems to us that in one way the Center party has only a negative meaning for Americans: that is, it indicates rather clearly that a Catholic political party would be valueless in the United States. Germany is a country of many organizations and parties, the majority of which are colored by allegiance to a *Weltanschauung*. We in this country have developed a two-party system, and there is nothing to indicate either that a third powerful party would be desirable or that it is in process of formation. Time and time again efforts have been made to foster a liberal political movement, but the history of these attempts since the Civil War appears to indicate that all are futile. If one does succeed later on, it will certainly not be a Catholic party. Again, we lack the conditions and aids by reason of which the Center has flourished. The organizational substratum is, for example, completely missing.

On the other hand, the Center party does have very much to tell us. Its treasury of thought on social and political problems, hammered out laboriously on the anvil of experience, is one thing on which we can meditate with profit. Of course not everything can be adopted here. What we need rather is the method with which Catholic Germany has tested theories and arrived at conclusions. This may be compared with a funnel at the mouth of which there is a strainer. The whole of contemporary reality—situations, ideas, psychologies, personalities, tradition—enters the funnel without let or hindrance. But resistance is immediately offered by habits of thought, just as the sides of the funnel narrow down to the spout. Then the strainer eliminates what is not aceptable, so that the stream which filters through is clear. Is not our tendency frequently the reverse of all this? We place the funnel face down on the table of discussion. Then we try to pour through the spout only what we decide a priori is good or dignified. And when something finally passes through the strainer, it is sprinkled over a wide area and—evaporates. From this point of view, Catholic Germany has much to say to us, and it is sincerely to be hoped that some day we shall listen.

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THE BELLS OF SAN JACINTO: I[1]

By DON MARQUIS

Bells of the past, whose long-forgotten music
Still fills the wide expanse,
Tingeing the sober twilight of the present
With color of romance.
Francis Bret Harte.

"IS THAT one of the old mission bells?" I asked.

"Yes," said Peter Kerrigan.

"No," said Chief Yellow Bird.

They looked at each other with a laugh. "It's really six of the old mission bells, recast into one," said Kerrigan.

We were sitting in the *patio* of Kerrigan's dwelling, situated upon the lower slope of one of the hills overlooking Hollywood. In the center of the *patio* is a fountain, and near the fountain was the bell, secured with rawhide lashings to a cross-beam laid in the forks of two pear trees. I had been looking at it idly while the other two discussed the Indian and his wrongs. Kerrigan, having an eighth part Indian blood in him, is more sentimental over Indians than Chief Yellow Bird, who is a full blood.

I asked him why this should be so, and Kerrigan replied: "Yellow Bird is too superior to get worked up over anything; he's proud of being able to seem indifferent." He added, grunting and mocking his friend: "Yellow Bird heap big high-brow."

"The Indian stoicism," I suggested.

"Perhaps," said Yellow Bird. "On the other hand, it may be that I got that way at Harvard."

Yellow Bird is one of the main attractions at a village which Kerrigan maintains between Hollywood and the sea, a venture partly commercial and partly sentimental. It is a clearing-house for Indian manufactures, pottery, baskets, blankets and the rest of it; and it is also a show place. Yellow Bird is sophisticated, cultivated, educated, almost to the point of decadence. The Carlisle School, Harvard and Oxford have all contributed to his scepticism regarding the current world, without in the least detracting from the striking barbaric appearance he makes in feathers and buckskins. Kerrigan, nearer sixty than fifty, looks scarcely forty-five; he has seen an older West go and a newer West arrive, and he not only collects Indians but a good deal of money as well, being currently interested in oil and real estate.

"The bell itself is not stoical, at least," said Kerrigan. "Listen."

He had been whittling a piece of soft wood, and now he rose and struck sharply against the rim of the bell with the handle of his jack-knife.

A note of a strange timbre rang out—melodious, but like a cry of despair from human lips. It had something of the quality of Indian music, Indian song, desolate and penetrating and weird. It was startling, it was more than startling. We were basking in the candid, strong sun of a Southern California afternoon, but nevertheless it made me shiver.

"What did it say?" I asked, for a definite emotion had spoken clearly to Kerrigan and Yellow Bird, and, less sharply, to me. I insisted on having the story.

(2)

The people who were once concerned with this bell (said Chief Yellow Bird) are no longer concerned with anything. There remains nothing of their lives except the echo of a cry, uncertain shapes that turn to vapor as the mind tries to fix them, and the memory of one strange scene at the time of cock-crow in the morning.

Peter Kerrigan found this bell amongst the ruins of a 'dobe chapel on a little fruit ranch which he bought a few years since. The fruit ranch was once a small part of a large estate, a great Spanish *hacienda,* and the man who administered it a century ago might ride twenty miles in any direction from his house without getting off his own land. The house and all the other buildings, thanks to time and temblors, were almost as ruinous as the chapel itself. When Peter brought the bell to town here, and told me where it came from, it was I who told him what it was. My grandfather had shown me that tumbled chapel a long time ago; he himself had helped to build it, and he had helped the men who cast this big bell from the metal of the six smaller ones.

I was brought up by this grandfather. My father was merely a drunken Indian who got himself shot by a drunken white man because he liked to talk too much about the wrongs of the Indian, and I do not remember him, for that was fifty years ago when I was scarcely more than a baby. He amounted to nothing at all, and I amount to less, for I am a mountebank. I am pagan, in spite of all the efforts which have been made in my behalf, and I call myself Yellow Bird. But my grandfather was Christian and civilized and his baptismal name was Miguel.

Miguel was more than eighty when he died, and that was thirty years ago, when I was a boy of twenty. So you see that he was born in the twenties of the last century when the power of the Franciscan missions was at its height in this country. As a boy he saw their prosperity at its crest under the régime of the Spanish crown; as a youth he lived through the time of their dwindling under the Mexican republic; and as a young man he saw their influence all but disappear under the rule of the United States. But the memory of them

[1]Editors' Note: Mr. Marquis's story, which THE COMMONWEAL is very glad indeed to publish, will appear in three consecutive instalments, of which this is the first. The scene is old California; the psychology is modern.

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was always with him like a chapter out of some fabulous age of gold. He looked back and wondered why the good God had allowed this glory to pass from the earth. To talk with him of them was like talking with some Greek who had known the heroes of Homer, or some early Christian who had encountered Paul at Ephesus or Athens, who had known the glamor of a great epoch, who had seen it fade, and who seeks forever to dream his way back again into a vanished world.

Miguel was born upon the lands of the *asistencia* of San Jacinto, which neighbored the *hacienda* of which I have spoken. Fray Juan Garcia was the resident Padre of the *asistencia,* and the proprietor of the *hacienda* was a Castilian gentleman. These two were friends and intimates.

This establishment of San Jacinto, like that of San Antonio de Pala, was never technically a mission itself, with a place upon the roster; but an offshoot—an *asistencia* or assistant mission, as I have said. Nor is it to be confused with the *pueblo* of San Jacinto, many miles distant, which still survives as a town. But San Jacinto did all the work of a mission and was usually called one in its own day. It had its *convento* and its resident Padre, its village of some hundreds of Christian Indians, or *neofitoes* as they were called, its church and *campanario,* its many square miles of territory with great flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, its vineyards and garden lands and orchards, its store rooms and workshops and hospitals, its artizans and even its artists, and its wide and good influence. From San Diego in the south to San Francisco there were nearly two dozen of these missions and *asistencias,* with their thousands upon thousands of Christianized Indians who attuned their lives to the melodious clamor of the bells and went their ways in peace. The Franciscan Padres, with great toil and devotion, had created a little separate world here; a world with a quality and spirit quite unique, a world with its own surprising culture.

(3)

There were several persons at the mission whose personalities remained impressed upon Miguel to the day of his death, and who had much to do with the bell which hangs here. One was a youth somewhat older than he and, like himself, a full-blooded Indian. He had been baptized by the name of Gabriel, Gabriel the archangel.

"And, indeed," Miguel used to say to me, "this Gabriel was like an angel."

For Gabriel was an artist. To hear my grandfather tell of him you would have thought this Gabriel was Leonardo da Vinci himself. For he could draw and illuminate manuscripts; he was a sculptor and could carve out of wood the images of saints and gild and paint them afterward; he was an architect and could plan buildings; he was a singer and a musician as well. One need not be too much surprised at all this. There were many artists among these Indians. The Franciscan Padres were always on the outlook for talent and careful to encourage it; they treated these Indians as human souls instead of taking them for granted as savages with little possibility of development. It was not alone the art of Gabriel which drew my grandfather to him in admiration and affection; the young man seems to have had a free and noble nature, a simplicity and directness of character which won for him love and leadership. These qualities of the mind had stamped an eager beauty upon the flesh.

"All souls live again after death," Miguel said to me, in speaking of this long-lost friend. " I know that. But if I did not believe any other soul lived, I should still know that Gabriel lives."

There was Fernando the *alcalde,* greatly trusted by the resident Padre, who set the herdsmen and artizans their tasks, acting as a kind of overseer. Fernando was a few years older than Gabriel or Miguel and he was a *mestizo,* the son of a Spanish soldier and an Indian mother. He was slow and heavy; he did not talk a great deal.

"It was as if Fernando's lips were slow and heavy, too," said Miguel. "You could think of them as being made of heavy clay, and his face of heavy clay."

It was thus he conveyed to me a sense of brooding weight in this Fernando. Fernando had a great deal of authority, under the Padre; an authority which I suppose to have been augmented where the Indians were concerned by the fact that he was half Spanish. He considered himself to belong to the *gente de razon,* the "people of intelligence," as the Spaniards called themselves, rather than to the Indians; his attitude was usually very patronizing toward Gabriel and Miguel. Nevertheless these three, leaders among the young men at the mission, were friends—friends through all their youth, at least, until the casting of this bell before you flung a fatal dispersion among them.

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These were Miguel's friends; but the man whom he not only loved and reverenced but also, I think, somewhat feared, was Fray Juan Garcia himself, the resident Padre.

"Fray Juan Garcia was made of iron," Miguel used to say to me, always with the same gesture of his hands and arms. "Iron. Tall. Strong. Wide. Made of iron."

Miguel himself was bred a blacksmith and a metal worker, and his feeling for iron carried with it a sense of the strength and endurance of the material, and not any connotation of harshness. Fray Juan Garcia had been to Miguel the next thing to divinity, and remained so in his imagination throughout Miguel's pious and laborious life.

Nor does a blacksmith think of iron, necessarily, as cold. He sees and knows it more often white-hot and red-hot; and I knew from the way Miguel spoke that Fray Juan Garcia would sometimes be red-hot and sometimes white-hot with zeal and the missionary

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spirit and the love of his fellow creatures. Miguel's own eyes would glow when he said:

"Fray Juan Garcia—his eyes were coals from the forge!"

His way of speaking made me see this old Padre's countenance leap out of the shadows of time as if it were fire gleaming through the hooded iron framework of an old-fashioned lantern. Miguel thought of him, and pressed the thought into my own youth, as a being possessed of more than the usual mortal attributes and energies.

He had the patience of iron. But sparks would sometimes fly. He carried always swung at his side, as if it were a crusader's blade and the sword of his faith, a very large iron crucifix. The tale was told of him that once in the days of his early and vigorous manhood, when the mission was winning its way, he was attacked on the outskirts of his barony by no fewer than four murderous Gentiles, as the unconverted Indians were quaintly called, and that after a terrible struggle he disabled two of them and the other two ran away.

"My faith vanquished them," he said, with a touch of grim humor, pointing to the iron crucifix. But one of these same Indians whom he had all but killed, he cured and converted, tending him night and day although he was sorely injured himself, and finally turning the man's ignorant fury into a reverential love. We are not orthodox, you and I, but we must admit that these missionaries had their quality, heroic in toil and strife.

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I do not know where the six bells of San Jacinto were originally cast, whether in Spain or in New England, nor in what laborious wind-jammer they were brought around the Horn to California, nor what inscriptions in monkish Latin they bore about their rims. But it was American cannon which battered them to pieces, very needlessly and wantonly, before they were recast into this one big bell here. San Jacinto had known a quick flowering beneath the Spanish crown. It began to dwindle under the Mexican republic and after the secularization of the missions the decline was more rapid; for with the secularization the Franciscan Padres lost temporal power and the great estates were taken from them by the government.

Fray Juan Garcia stayed on at San Jacinto, keeping as many of his Indians together as he could, until war came between Mexico and the United States. When California became involved in that strife he went to the *hacienda* of his friend, the Castilian gentleman, which neighbored the mission. He ordered his Indians to follow him, and on no account to make any resistance to the Americans who were taking over the country. It would have been well had all obeyed. But some two or three score tried to resist. Miguel, who was among them, was never clear in his mind why.

"I think, perhaps," Miguel told me, "we were fighting for our *campo santo.*" Their cemetery with its humble crosses in which many of them had buried their fathers and mothers, that was all the cause these Indians had left.

It was with a kind of childish defiance of they knew not what that they flew the Mexican flag —the flag of the government which had ruined them!—over the mission after the rest of the country had given in. There were more bows and arrows than muskets amongst them, and nothing in the way of artillery except an old Spanish *pedrero,* an ancient swivel gun which they had used to frighten away evil spirits on days of *fiesta.* And there was not a Mexican soldier—only these silly Indians with their vague and futile loyalty to a doomed culture. The young American officer in charge of the small detachment sent to pull down their flag had two four-pounder cannon with him and enjoyed the sport of battering the place to pieces. He personally trained his guns at the six bells swinging in the *campanario,* laughing when he scored a hit. There was not one bell which was not more or less broken. Finally the bell tower itself came tumbling down with the shattered bells mingled in the wreckage. Even after the rest of the buildings were in ruins, and all the Indians had run away except a few who had been killed, he continued for a whole day to batter the heaps of adobe. Having demolished San Jacinto, the American troops did not occupy it; it had no military importance.

Fray Juan Garcia began to collect his scattered Indians, and gradually more than a hundred of them were gathered about their Padre again on the *hacienda* of the generous Castilian who gave them refuge.

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The Padre and his Indians began at once to build themselves a chapel, for it was the hope of Fray Juan Garcia that he might reëstablish on the *hacienda,* aided by its sympathetic owner, something resembling the old mission life. The ruins of San Jacinto were ransacked for anything useful which might be salvaged. Foremost in the work of reconstruction was the Padre himself, kneading adobe bricks like a common laborer, and helping to hew beams and make tile for roofs and *ladrillos* for pavements.

After some time, the Padre noticed that Gabriel had not been helping for several days, and inquired of Fernando and Miguel where he was.

"He is making an angel, Padre," said Miguel.

"An angel?" said the Father, in some surprise; for there was more immediate rougher work to be done before these pious decorations were in order, and Gabriel was not a shirker.

"I told him," said Fernando the *alcalde,* "that it was wrong to plan this without your permission, but he disregards my authority."

"Come," said the Padre; "let us see this angel."

Dropping their task amongst the adobes, the others led the priest to the place where Gabriel had improvised an out-door studio beneath some lemon trees. He was intently at work with his pigments upon a large

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parchment, made from a sheepskin, which he had stretched upon a wooden frame.

"This is all very well," said the Padre, while Miguel and Fernando stood and listened, "but I have other work for you."

"Yes, Padre," said Gabriel, who had risen and was looking at his work more than at the priest. Gabriel did not say that there were others who could hew beams and mix 'dobe tricks, but that only he among them could paint an angel; he was too reverential to say that to the Father, but later he said it to Miguel.

"I shall want bells for our new chapel. I want you to plan the *campanario,* and design the bells," said the Padre. "We shall go to the old belfry and turn over the wreckage, and find every piece of broken metal—every piece, Gabriel!—and we shall have our old bells again, ready to hang in place when our belfry is finished."

All of them took fire at that, Fernando and Miguel and Gabriel, the latter even forgetting his angel for a minute. And Miguel, the metal worker, was especially pleased, for here was work in which he could be of great assistance.

"I have thought," said the Padre, "that perhaps it might be better if we were to cast them all into one great bell—a big bell, Gabriel, that will fling its note far across these hills and valleys and call our people back from the distances to which they have strayed."

"A great bell, Padre, which will give notice to all the world that we are still here!" cried Gabriel.

"Exactly. But there is much to be done. We must first learn, for instance, how bells are cast—and there is no one to teach us that but ourselves." He added: "None but God."

These Franciscans, in their missions, were accustomed to start with next to nothing, and arrive at some most astonishing results. They always gave the entire credit of their achievements to God; and I have some times wondered if such humility is not a good thing in any of the arts.

"So put the angel by, Gabriel, until we have our chapel and our campanario," concluded Fray Juan Garcia, and Miguel loved him more that moment for the kindliness in his voice toward this other one whom he loved. Everyone knew that Gabriel wanted to go ahead with his angel, very intensely wanted it.

"Yes, Padre," he said, nevertheless.

But he looked at his angel longingly, and the Father looked at it. Suddenly Fray Juan Garcia said:

"But what is this, Gabriel? The face of this angel is like the face of someone whom I know!"

Gabriel was confused and dropped his eyes for a moment. And then he raised them, saying:

"Perhaps it is Consuelo, Father. For it is she of whom I think when I work upon my angel."

"Consuelo?" Miguel saw the Padre look searchingly at Gabriel. "And this girl is to you like an angel—an angel who is worthy to be placed in our chapel to remind us of Paradise?"

"No woman is worthy to be set in our church as an angel!" It was Fernando who spoke, and the others turned to him. He spoke slowly and he was under the influence of a strong emotion or he would not have dared to take upon himself the task of rebuking whom only the Padre should have rebuked.

He got himself rebuked. "Fernando," said the Padre, "what you say may be true; that no woman is an angel. But you are not the person who should have said this of Consuelo, for you have told me that you love her and wish to marry her—therefore, Fernando, you should think that she is an angel, whether she is or not."

Fernando was sullen. But he only said, accepting the rebuke: "Yes, Father."

Consuelo, like Fernando the *alcade,* was half Spanish and half Indian; she had been born on the *hacienda,* and no one know who her father was, but it was whispered here and there that it was the proprietor of the *hacienda* himself, who had been a widower many years.

"Gabriel should not have painted this angel without asking permission beforehand to put her in our church," said Fernando. Gabriel looked at the *alcalde* in some bewilderment, as if not able to understand how his friend should suddenly feel for him something like anger.

"Fernando, you will come with me," said the Padre. "I must speak with you seriously."

"Yes, Padre," said Fernando, but with a sulky look at Gabriel.

"And as for this angel, Gabriel," said the Padre, before he turned away, "we will put it by, for the present. Later, we shall see whether it is to be finished and put into the chapel. I see nothing wrong with using Consuelo as a model; a painter must have a model—it has been done before. But now, Gabriel, get to work on plans for the *campanario* and the bell; and you, Miguel, get back to adobes."

Yes, Padre," said they all.

And looking sternly at Fernando, Fray Juan Garcia strode off with him.

Of What Avail

I will withstand my white love to her face,
My silver moon. O, bitterest thing to do!
I cannot be her thrall and lover, too;
I must have freedom for a little space
From her inevitable beauty, her still grace,
Her nonchalant way across the night's dim blue,
Her winds of mere caprice. Yes, I will sue
For respite and release, some temperate place

Of peace. But when these delicate bonds I sunder
What shall avail me my accomplished quest?
What wings of freedom can I hide me under
Or whither flee when next she walks the west
In all her innocent tyranny of white wonder
With twilight's simple blossom at her breast.

SISTER M. MADELEVA.

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SOCIAL CREDIT IN AMERICA

By GORHAM MUNSON

Interest in the theory of social credit proposed by Major C. H. Douglas is not new. As a matter of fact, THE COMMONWEAL *printed two papers concerning it some years ago, when the theory was first introduced to the United States by Mr. A. R. Orage. At present there is in process of formation a group actively devoted to the idea. We have accordingly requested Mr. Munson to write the present paper, which he will follow up with another to be published soon. A third cognate paper will discuss certain aspects of the theory not touched upon by Mr. Munson.—The Editors.*

SUPPORTERS of social credit in America are predicting that within two months this movement to finance the consumer will be widely discussed. It may seem that they are wildly optimistic, considering the infant stage of the American movement. Yet it may be that the breaking down of rigidities in the public mind which our intimate experience of the paradox of poverty and plenty has accomplished will make the public mind almost immediately receptive to new and unexpected proposals for reforming our monetary system. Furthermore, the vogue of technocracy has prepared the way for just such proposals as those of Major C. H. Douglas, who is the formulator of the social credit theory.

Technocracy, no matter how discredited its leader has been, did plant in the American mind two correct conceptions: a conception of the immense real wealth of our nation and a conception of the inadequacy of our distributive or monetary system to make demand on our real wealth. But technocracy did not pretend to solve the problem of adjusting the financial system to our enormous productive system. Thus the public, while assured that the defect was in our monetary system, has been left without a clue as to how the money system might be changed so that it would distribute the abundance of goods and services ready to be tapped. Social credit is set forth to be the answer, and, for the reasons that are here given, perhaps it will be avidly seized upon and debated, as the findings of technocracy were.

Interest will then focus not only on the ideas of social credit but on the personnel and history of the movement, and it is with these latter that this article will chiefly deal.

Who, in the first place, is Major C. H. Douglas? A brief sketch of him written by Mr. A. R. Orage appeared in THE COMMONWEAL (February 17, 1926) in the course of a series entitled "An Editor's Progress" —incidentally the first authoritative exposition of the social credit proposals printed in an American magazine and therefore a feather in the cap of THE COMMONWEAL for mental alertness. By way of supplement to that sketch, it may be stated that Major Douglas is a Scotsman, a cousin of Lord Weir, who was educated at Cambridge University and trained to be a civil engineer. He went out to India in charge of the Westinghouse interests in the East, and during his sojourn there enjoyed many dinner conversations with the gentleman who was then controller-general of India. The theme of this gentleman's discourse was generally credit. He told frequently of his experiences in India and England with Treasury officials who persisted in melting down and recoining rupees, having regard to the quantity theory of money. His own observation was that silver and gold have nothing to do with the situation which depends almost entirely on credit, and he left Major Douglas with this fact to deliberate on. Major Douglas returned to England to build railways, and then came the war. He was appointed assistant director of the Royal Aircraft Works and found it necessary to study cost accountancy more closely than he had before.

One day it struck him that the wages and salaries distributed each week by the Royal Aircraft Works did not equal the price of the goods produced, and that this was true of every factory in every week, and therefore it was true that the total amount of purchasing power distributed by British industry was insufficient in any given week to meet the collective prices of the products for that week. This is a deceptively simple observation; it led Major Douglas to formulate a year or so later what he calls the A plus B Theorem and all the complexities that underlie it, and this theorem in turn has been the center of protracted heated debate for fourteen years. The claim is that it reveals a mathematical defect in national loan accountancy and thereby makes the solution of the economic problem primarily an exercise in mathematics. The theorem admittedly deals with elusive matters, but the effects of the error in accountancy disclosed by it are everybody's experience, namely, a chronic shortage of purchasing power in the pockets of the community and the restriction placed on the world's population that it must engage in the production of further goods (which may never be wanted) in order to secure a claim on goods already in existence.

One other thing Major Douglas noted during the war impressed him greatly. He saw financiers doing things they had before the war declared impossible. He saw them break the tabus of their system and adjust finance to war-time conditions. Money could be found for anything. And why? Because war is an imperious consumer. Suppose in peace-time the consumer should be made paramount? Was it beyond human ingenuity to devise a system intermediate to producer and consumer which instead of maintaining an artificial scarcity would actually reflect the facts of industry and con-

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sumption, the facts, namely, of plentiful supply and acute need for goods? Why should war be a time of economic peace, and why should peace be a time of economic war?

Thus Major Douglas came to attack directly the problem of consumption, and, remembering his old friend in India, he made a fresh study of credit, from which he emerged with the conviction that the key is in credit. He began in 1918 to write articles for the *English Review.* Soon afterward he called on Mr. Orage, then editor of the *New Age* which supported the National Guilds movement, and the chronicle of what ensued has already been set forth by Mr. Orage in his COMMONWEAL series.

Now to turn to America. In 1920 an American publisher brought out Major Douglas's "Economic Democracy," which had run serially in the *New Age* and had then been published in book form in London. The book created anything but a stir in America for reasons easy to understand. Not only were its ideas novel and times elusive, but its language was abstruse, and not only abstruse but condensed. Since then Major Douglas has achieved a style of weight, dignity and strength, and he has reworked his ideas into the world's language, but at the beginning few were the readers hardy enough to fight their way inch by inch through the text and capture the train of thought. These few, however, realized that Chapters V, VIII, IX and X of "Economic Domocracy" were possibly epoch-making. The flutter of perfunctory reviews in American periodicals subsided without anybody announcing a new genius in economic thought, and for ten years there was scarcely a mention of Major Douglas in our press.

He was mentioned to be disagreed with by Messrs. W. T. Foster and Waddill Catchings in their book, "Money," but it is plain that he also exerted considerable influence on the thought of these Americans. Only not enough, as the depression has revealed. Early in 1929 the *New Age,* displaying its wisdom in advance of the Hoover debacle, commented editorially on the Foster-Catchings doctrine.

> If anyone has seen a cat rush like a hurricane straight for a ditch, pull itself up in its own length, and sit down to lick itself an inch from the edge, he has seen Messrs. Foster and Catchings. There sits this cat, on the statesmanlike side of the ditch of price-regulation, a pet of Wall Street's and an exhibit of Washington's.

This rebuke was administered because, while Messrs. Foster and Catchings were admirable in their exposition of "business without a buyer," the only remedy they proposed was, as the *New Age* said, "merely that moldering old corpse, loan-credit regulation." Unfortunately for us, it was just the Foster-Catchings policy which President Hoover trusted during the depression.

In 1928 a popular exposition of the Douglas social credit proposals written by Mr. Maurice Colbourne was published in New York. What seed it planted is unknown. It sold slowly, never went beyond one edition, and was not calculated in its manner to impress the intellectuals. Messrs. Foster and Catchings had the floor, and if better ideas than theirs on what to do about increasing effective consumer-demand did not win a hearing, theirs is the fault—in part. Mr. Colbourne had titled his book "Unemployment or War," the two alternatives of our maladjusted industrial-financial system, and in 1929 the first alternative began to hit us with cumulative force. It need scarcely be said that the American intelligentsia were unprepared for the emergency, criminally unprepared, I wish to add, for what is the first duty of an intelligentsia if not to ensure that a complete repertory of ideas on any major subject of human concern is accessible? Our repertory of economic ideas was not complete; it lacked the idea of Distributism, for one; it lacked, for another, the idea of social credit, which in the meantime atracted a considerable following in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the British Isles. The omission of social credit is the more remarkable in that Major Douglas twice visited the United States, the first time in 1921 to consult with the chiefs of the Railway Brotherhoods about their plan to enter banking, and again in 1923 when he was on his way to testify at Ottawa before the banking committee of the Canadian Parliament.

The fact is the eyes of the American intelligentsia were on Russia, and its revolutionary change in administering production, and its national plan for equating production to consumption, i.e., for industrializing a backward nation. They missed the astonishing initiative in economic thought being displayed in England, missed the supremely important fact that there, almost under their noses as compared to events in Russia, Major Douglas was elaborating the very thing needed for the situation of an industrially advanced nation, namely, a policy and plan for consumption, missed the brilliant journalism of Arthur Brenton and Philip Mairet and the picturesque activities of John Hargrave, the founder of the Green Shirt movement, and finally they missed the political explosions over Major Douglas's ideas in the Colonies. Belatedly the American intelligentsia are now awaking to the existence of the fourteen-year-old social credit movement; however, if negligent as lookouts for new ideas, they are also plastic when at last they catch wind of a new idea, which is why the guarded prediction made at the beginning of this article may come true.

But to what may their awakening, after twice seven years, be attributed? It would be foolish to assign any one cause, but it is undeniable that a new periodical issued last April has had a good deal to do with focussing interest in America on radical credit-reform. In 1931 a silght background for social credit ideas had been created in New York by the lectures of Mr. Orage and Mr. Schuyler Jackson, former literary editor of *Time,* but the new periodical of course reached at once

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an American audience multiplied many times over the attendance at these lectures, and at first it naturally bewildered this audience by its economic policy. I am referring to the *New English Weekly* which Mr. Orage founded in London and edits in that place. It is distributed in America by a prominent publishing house, and perhaps a quarter of its circulation is in this country. In the first number it proclaimed itself against the internationalism of bankers and for the "building a new world, based on the full satisfaction of the home market (which we call economic nationalism) on and out of the ruins of the old world based, as it was, on the satisfaction of international markets at the expense of one's own." With a brilliance and wit, a force and eloquence conceded by its enemies, it has fought for this policy and has never left a single reader in doubt as to where it stood on the paramount questions of the period. Its decisiveness of utterance has been noteworthy, and its ambition to supply leadership out of the economic debacle has been unconcealed. The American audience, as I have indicated, came innocent of the economic ideas permeating the *New English Weekly,* but after six months of reading, a minority found itself not only convinced that Major Douglas had touched the bottom of the economic problem but galvanized into activity besides.

Organizations established to spread social credit sprang up in New York, Philadelphia, Colorado Springs, Santa Fé, and San Francisco. The largest of these is the New Economics Group of New York with an office, a staff of volunteer workers, and a membership of approximately one hundred. It sponsors lectures, corresponds with the barter groups, and has issued a pamphlet, "Financial Freedom for Americans." This pamphlet, by the way, revives the idea of the Pre-Revolutionary War Committee of Correspondence. It is a statement of the rights of American citizens as consumers and was signed by, amongst others, the publicist, Herbert Bruce Brougham, the artist, Boardman Robinson, the publisher, T. R. Coward, a former editor of the *New Republic,* T. S. Matthews, the print expert, Carl Zigrosser, the psychologist, C. Daly King, and a one-time verse-contributor to THE COMMONWEAL, Mavis McIntosh.

The rights of American would-be consumers—perhaps what the New Economics Group and the *New English Weekly* and Major Douglas stand for—may be suggested by summing them up in one basic right, the use of the real credit of the community. The reader who is shy of pure economic thought will pardon one economic definition at the close. Real credit is the correct estimate of the capacity of a community to deliver goods and services as, when and where required. Real credit is social or communal in origin; it is a joint creation of producers and consumers, who together compose the community. This is so because real credit involves two factors, either useless without the other, the factor of ability to produce and the factor of need to consume.

At present there is a bankers' monopoly of credit. What Major Douglas and his adherents maintain is that credit should be socialized. But to give the community the use of its own credit involves no overthrow of government, no confiscation, no nationalizing of the banks, no venting of a spirit of revenge, no violation of man by trying to cut him to a rationalistic pattern devised by doctrinaire theorists. It literally involves only a technical remedy for a technical defect in our price-system. That correction would certainly increase the liberty of Americans, it would certainly increase their leisure, and since liberty and leisure are the favorable conditions for the psychological growth of man, it would in all probability lead to a new age of culture. By itself the technical remedy would bring in no millenium, but applied, it would, it is claimed, mark a turning-point in human history away from an obsession with the mere getting of a livelihood to an opening out of opportunity for bringing to pass on our planet the kind of life that something in man, rebelling at debasing conditions, tells him to hope for.

March Evening

This pool, the quiet sky.
Is rippled with a chime.
Night gathers, and the cry
Of lambs in the far fold
Comes to us as we climb:
The moorland air is cold.

Ghost-pale the grass, and bare
The boulder-scattered crest.
A frightened rabbit starts—
With quickening eyes and hearts
We turn about, and stare
Into the open west.

The Cornish hills lie small,
So huge the sky has grown.
We can look down on all
Western and southern ground,
And see the Eddystone,
Pricking the seaward pall,
Wink over Plymouth Sound.

Below us, dim and deep,
Mist-hidden, murmuring,
The valley winds away:
Beneath its shadow spring
Lies light asleep
In dreams of coming day,
With cuckoos on the wing
And steep banks blossoming.

Again the quiet sky
Is troubled with a chime
That spreads in rings of sound.
We sigh, and think, What rhyme
That man has ever bound
Can hold a sigh?

L. A. G. STRONG.

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CATHOLIC ACTION FOR PEACE

By JOHN TRACY ELLIS

OVER fifteen years have passed since Pope Benedict XV, in the midst of the carnage of the World War, pronounced his famous allocution directed to the belligerent powers on August 1, 1917. On that occasion the Pontiff elaborated a highly moral and reasoned set of peace terms by which the nations might arrive at a peace equitable to all, through restitution of occupied territories and colonial possessions, a general program of disarmament, and cancellation of the charges for indemnities and damages. His Holiness rested his case upon the fundamental principle of a substitution of moral right for the material force of arms. The reception given to the Pontiff's message was for the most part indifferent, if not actually hostile in some quarters. Even the specter of religious intolerance seems to have cast its shadow over the hope for a coöperative response from one of the major powers, as we may learn from the recently published investigations of Friedrich von Lama. The late Ambassador Jusserand of France stated in a letter written just a few weeks before his death that the efforts of Benedict XV struck our American President as an irritating interference, and Wilson showed his pique in conversation with Jusserand when he referred to the Pope's action as "butting in."

Thus Benedict was constrained to watch the war move to its painful and exhausting close in 1918, and also to its settlement of 1919 which departed so widely from the sane terms he had laid down in his allocution. The full effects of the conflict were not felt during the remaining years of Benedict's life. The strained and artificial structure upon which the world had reared itself in the previous decades reeled on into the years after his death. The universal affliction of the disaster has been visited upon his successor.

With the steady consistency which is so much a characteristic of Rome and her Pontiffs, Pope Pius XI has returned again and again to the principles of international order and peace which became so intimately a part of the teaching of Benedict. Pius XI, as father of a Universal Church with adherents in all quarters of the globe, has been taxed as few Popes of modern times, to guide those committed to his care through one of the most generally distressful periods of the world's history. Coupled to the accompanying hardship which follows every war there has come an economic and social disarrangement which aproximates perilously to collapse. This tragic situation has been the source of much grief to His Holiness, but the grief has in no way dimmed the Pontiff's sense of responsibility and leadership.

The occasion of so much widespread suffering has led Pope Pius XI to the launching of a gigantic crusade for Catholic Action in every phase of human affairs. With sharp and incisive thrusts the Pontiff has cut through the labyrinth of economic bewilderment, social chaos and religious confusion to set before men a remarkable program of moral principles by which the unfortunate state in which the world finds itself today may be remedied. The reception accorded this undertaking has been gratifying, and the roots of Catholic Action are slowly but very certainly permeating to the Catholic masses, as well as to many outside the Church. From a body of principles the Catholic Action program of Pius XI is gradually being translated into a lively reality. Particularly is this phenomenon evident in the economic and social orders wherein men find themselves most keenly touched by the disorders of our day.

However, there is one very essential phase of Catholic Action which needs, so it seems to the writer, more decided emphasis and serious thought amongst our Catholic people. The failure of emphasis in this regard can in no sense be laid at the door of the Vatican, for Pius XI has been most insistent in his definition and analysis of its vital character. Rarely has he uttered an encyclical letter in recent years wherein it does not find prominent mention. But it would appear that ears have not been attuned to the imperative necessity. That phase of the broad campaign of Catholic Action is the duty of every Catholic to work for the establishment of the genuine moral principles necessary to international peace. His Holiness gave striking expression to his concept of this duty in his Christmas allocution to the College of Cardinals on December 24, 1930, when he said:

> The glory and duty of this apostolate of peace belong principally to us and to all called to be ministers of the God of peace. But here is a vast and glorious field for all the Catholic laity, too, whom we unceasingly call upon and ask to share in the hierarchical apostolate. To Catholics of all the world and particularly those who study, labor and pray in Catholic Action, we turn today with this warm invitation and plea.

To Catholics especially this appeal for international understanding should present itself as a solemn duty. As members of an international body with coreligionists in all countries they should avail themselves of the singularly unique bond for the molding of international friendship which the Church offers. No one wishes war, but it is not sufficient to content oneself merely with a process of negative thinking; it is incumbent to take the positive steps to insure peace. It is a commonplace to remark that most of our present difficulties can be traced to the World War and its effects; it is as well a commonplace to state that another such catastrophe would seriously threaten the very fabric of our civilization. For that reason the poignancy of the Pontiff's

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allusions to war, armaments and offensive nationalism are brought near to us when we reflect that a goodly portion of the world is armed more heavily today than in 1914, and that the type of nationalism which is so injurious to world peace, and which Pius XI has condemned so strenuously, is blazing forth in 1933 with more fire than it mustered in 1913. Therefore when the Pontiff speaks from out of the wealth of his understanding and vision concerning the zeal Catholics should manifest and the efforts they should make to insure international peace, he is not dealing with contingencies which are remote.

With these few facts established, we may ask ourselves what is being done by our own American Catholics to carry forward that aspect of the program of Catholic Action upon which His Holiness has predicated so much importance. What have American Catholics accomplished along the front of international peace to follow the lines so definitely marked out by Our Holy Father?

Some six years ago when the Eucharistic Congress at Chicago assembled representatives of practically every national group within the Universal Church on the shores of Lake Michigan for the staging of that magnificent demonstration of Catholic faith and unity, the germ of such Catholic Action in this country was planted. A small body of peace-loving and resourceful priests, laymen and laywomen conceived the idea of conducting a series of joint meetings with the visiting foreign representatives for the purpose of arriving at a clearer understanding of the international problems which faced them all as members of both an international Church and national states. The meetings were small, the discussions informal, and the notice given to them insignificant. But from those meetings there emanated the spirit and the hope which gave rise to a very appreciable movement in American Catholicism in the cause of international peace and amity.

In October of that Eucharistic Year in America a more pretentious meeting was held in Cleveland, followed by a longer conference in Washington in 1927, at which there was formally launched the Catholic Association for International Peace. From a dozen or so ardent proponents of the principles of friendliness and charity amongst the peoples of all nations meeting in 1927, the organization has grown to quite mature proportions in the last five years. At its regional conference held in St. Louis in February, 1932, the Catholic Association for International Peace numbered over three hundred at its luncheon meeting and almost a thousand at its night session. From a relatively tiny group of Catholics interested in this vital part of Catholic Action so forcefully urged by Pope Pius, who met only once a year, the Association has swelled to numerous groups of clergy and laity in all parts of the country, who have enthusiastically acted as hosts to a series of regional conferences which are conducted in addition to the annual meeting.

But how, one may ask, does this Association fulfil the obligation imposed by the Sovereign Pontiff on Catholics throughout the world to further the mission of world peace? Its *raison d'être* is clear. To quote its own words: "The ultimate purpose is to promote, in conformity with the mind of the Church, 'the Peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ.'" Moreover it has devised a practical method of procedure which is admirably suited to perform that service to Catholic Action. The Catholic Association for International Peace functions largely through a group of twelve committees, the membership of which is chosen with the idea of their special fitness to serve in the field to which the particular committee's time and study are devoted. The Association has committees on ethics under the chairmanship of Reverend Dr. John A. Ryan; international law and organization, Professor Charles G. Fenwick; economic relations, Professor Parker T. Moon; agriculture, Rev. Edgar Schmiedeler, O.S.B.; historical, Dr. William F. Roemer; education, Rev. Dr. John R. Hagen; national attitudes, Dr. Carlton J. H. Hayes; United States dependencies, William F. Montavon; Latin America, Reverend R. A. McGowan; Europe, Reverend Joseph F. Thorning, S.J.; and Asia, Dr. Elizabeth M. Lynskey. These groups are steadily engaged upon the preparation of reports which are submitted to the Association at its general meeting and later published in pamphlet form.

In the brief few years of its life the Catholic Association for International Peace has done much through the publication of its committee reports, now numbering fifteen in print and eleven in preparation, to provide Catholics with valuable reading material upon knotty international problems in which there is a definitely Catholic point of view. Careful investigations on such themes as "International Ethics," "Causes of War," and "The Ethics of War," to name but three reports, bring to the Catholic interested in these absorbing questions a fresh point of view, fresh because it is fundamentally moral. And no Catholic will deny that the world and its statesmen must be made to realize that a generous share of the problems with which they grapple have basically a moral background. Such handy mediums of information tend to create an enlightened Catholic opinion upon the quandaries confronting nations, and it is only through such means that the Soverign Pontiff's salutary program for world recovery can reach widely and affect deeply.

The Catholic Association for International Peace has accomplished much good as well in furthering the appreciation for and understanding of American points of view by Catholic groups abroad. The Association has kept up close contacts with the great international rendezvous at Geneva, sending from time to time representatives of its organization to Europe to sit in on conferences for the discussion of international affairs held among European groups of a similar character as the American Association. Furthermore its affiliations with like societies in this country not of the Catholic body, such as the Carnegie Endowment for Interna-

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tional Peace, have been mutually cordial and helpful, helpful especially to the latter in making clear the Catholic position on problems which arise in the domain of world relations.

Besides the manifold activities of its committees and the constant service of its central office in Washington, the Association has become a source from which there has reached out an aiding hand in the direction and orientation of discussions amongst small and local groups of Catholics throughout America. By means of study-club outlines which it furnishes to those interested in the movement of Catholic Action in all its phases, the Catholic Association for International Peace has been able to stimulate and guide the formation of a Catholic philosophy of peace in the minds of numerous parish units.

However, it would appear that perhaps the most valuable and enduring assistance that the Association has been able to give in the education for a Catholic philosophy of peace, has come through its contacts with the Catholic colleges. From its inception it has been the aim of the Catholic Association for International Peace to interest the youth of our Catholic colleges in this movement as an essential part of the general campaign of Catholic Action. It has realized the priceless boon of a peace-minded Catholic college generation. Therefore the efforts of its directors have been bent to render special service to the collegians in their study of international affairs. This has been done by establishing International Relations Clubs under the auspices of the Association in many of the Catholic colleges and among the Newman groups at the state universities.

Through this channel the Association has reached those whose views have not yet crystallized in what might be termed "war fixations." As a result there are hundreds of the rising generation of young men and women who will leave their colleges with explicitly moral interpretations upon such world problems as war, armament, etc. This contribution to the creation of a peace-minded citizenry is especially notable, and one for which the Catholic Association for International Peace will earn the gratitude of all who are sincerely concerned in the full execution of the Catholic Action movement.

That this experiment with the college groups is not mere fancy, the writer can avow through personal experience. Last year with the inspiration and encouragement given by the Association, and by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace as well, he organized an International Relations Club at St. Viator College, Bourbonnais, Illinois. The response which met this effort was most gratifying. One learned to his amazement that the collegians were not only passively interested but genuinely concerned to find a sane solution to the many vexing problems which confront international relations today. The above attempt was tried among a group of boys. During the present year it has been repeated with a group of girls at the College of St. Teresa, Winona, Minnesota, with equally encouraging effects. Bi-weekly meetings are held in these International Relations Clubs at which the pamphlets of the Catholic Association for International Peace on such subjects as the "Ethics of War" are analyzed by the students and made the theme for an evening's discussion. The result has been all that anyone interested in spreading the cause of Catholic Action in the field of international affairs could wish.

Sending forth Catholic young men and women tutored in the fundamental principles of the moral law as they apply to the relations between nations, and educated and informed regarding the ethics which must govern nations as well as individuals, would seem to be a service which, if it did no other, has fully justified the brief existence of the Catholic Association for International Peace. To train minds to think in terms of peace, to accept internationalism in its best sense, namely, in the sense in which Pope Pius XI uses it, will do much toward the eradication of the blatant nationalism which plagues every country and every people today, our own not excepted. For, as was mentioned above, it is not sufficient to have merely a horror of war and to offer lip-service to peace. In the words of the report on "International Ethics" issued by the Peace Association, "Unless we strive for peace by specific and practical methods, all our pacific professions are hollow and futile."

Finally may it not therefore be said that it is only by giving hearty coöperation and generous good-will to such organizations as the one described above that the Catholics of America can justify themselves as full and active members of Catholic Action. If this movement spreads widely amongst our Catholic population, and the principles and philosophy which it seeks to inculcate take deep root, the awful disasters which befell the world as it failed to heed Benedict XV's solutions in 1917, may be saved a ghastly repetition. It was to remedy these very disasters that Benedict's successor, Pope Pius XI, launched the drive for Catholic Action. International peace and world relationship, molded along the moral and spiritual grooves outlined by Pius XI, must accompany Catholic Action if it is to succeed fully in its high-born quest.

The Wishing-tree

Year after year, each pilgrim who has come
To this green rustling isle on Loch Maree
Has wedged his penny in the soft birch-bark
Of the old wishing-tree.

And now there's scarce a chink left in the trunk
To take another coin, and we must search
On tiptoe straining, if we'd try our luck
With the old wizard birch.

So thickly copper-studded is the bark
The birch is now just a dead metal tree;
And they who wished—how many ever came
Again to Loch Maree?

WILFRID GIBSON.

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RICHARD WAGNER

By KARL SCHAEZLER

ONLY a few months have passed since the centenary of the death of Germany's greatest poet, but already the world has noted, during February of this year, the fiftieth anniversary of the decease of Germany's foremost musician since Beethoven. And we may well grant that the stature of Richard Wagner does not render incongruous the mention of his name so soon after that of Goethe.

Goethe's very first novel earned for him a world-wide reputation. "The Sorrows of Werther" was even translated into Chinese. But fortune was anything but kind to Wagner at the beginning. The novelty of his work was too glaring to permit immediate and easy fame. Even so pleasant an opera as the "Meistersinger" was hooted off the stage on the occasion of its Berlin première. Satirical papers poked no end of fun at Wagner's "music of the future." "Tristan," "Das Rheingold," "Die Walkuere" and the unfinished "Siegfried" lay for years in his table-drawer because no one cared for them; and the "Ring" was not presented as whole until seven years before the death of the master at seventy. That fate proved kind to him just when his need was greatest is a familiar story, which reads like a fairy-tale. His Maecenas appeared in the person of King Ludwig, the "fairy king" as he was often called; and through the generosity of his patron Wagner was permitted to achieve public success. Soon afterward he had reached heights of glory never previously scaled by a musician. There was no country in which he was not produced, acclaimed and—imitated. For example, a German scholar who had traced the influence of Wagner on French literature found it necessary to write three volumes. Until just a few years ago, no opera written during the post-Wagnerian era escaped his dominion. We may therefore conclude that the ultimate popularity of Goethe and Wagner was strikingly similar.

Another point of contact between the two men (quite apart from the fact that Wagner also belongs to the history of literature) is the extent to which both made their art serve a *Weltanschauung*. The greatest divergence between them is that of style. Goethe is the representative classic writer; Wagner seems to be the typical romantic genius. The last statement is, to be sure, erroneous in so far as Wagner's musical technique in the widest sense is concerned. His conception of that has, as newer investigations conclusively prove, much affinity with classic art. His treatment of the leitmotif and the symphonic structure of the orchestral portions of his "music dramas" are evidence to that effect. Such matters are, however, necessarily the concern of the specialist. What matters to us here is that Wagner is even so, in a deeper sense, romantic. This fundamental strain in him is important, as in hardly another instance of musical genius, though he was too great to be caught permanently in the toils of a "school" or "style." It is the ethos of his achievement.

One can enjoy Wagner's music as a mere feast for the ear. His melodic structure is bewitchingly beautiful. It can fascinate even those for whom music as such has little meaning. On the other hand it is a mistake, as great as it is widespread, to seek nothing beyond enjoyment in Wagner's music. He not only has spiritual depth, but this depth is so extraordinary that it escapes the notice of very many people. The Germans have been called—long ago, to be sure—a nation of poets and thinkers. At any rate it is a fact that there is considerable of the philosopher in most German artists. From this point of view Wagner surpasses all other musicians. He is the one genuine metaphysician among them.

To demonstrate this it is necessary only to follow his development as revealed in his work. He began with romantic operas in the old style, for example "Die Feen" and "Der fliegende Holländer." After a digression into the domain of the traditional historical opera ("Rienzi") and those experiments in a transitional form which we know as "Tannhaeuser" and "Lohengrin," and in which he found his way to his final style, he turned in "Tristan" and the "Ring of the Nibelungen" to saga and myth and ended his creative activity with an opera—"Parsifal"—which is almost to be regarded as mystery or quasi-liturgical art. Fundamentally Goethe's development reveals a certain likeness to that of Wagner. He too began by writing "Werther" and "Götz von Berlichingen" in the popular style of the period. But he also came more and more under the spell of spiritual motives. Compare, for instance, "Tasso" with "Götz von Berlichingen," and "Werther" with "Wilhelm Meister." Ultimately his work ended in the speculative deeps to which "Faust" descends. The fact also deserves special and particular emphasis that the ultimate wisdom of both is redemption through love, for Christianity can reckon neither of them among its own.

Nevertheless there is a fundamental difference between the views of life entertained by the two men. Goethe was a realist, and for this reason has even a certain relationship to Thomistic thought. Wagner was an idealist, in conformity with the dominant philosophy of his time and particularly that of Schopenhauer, who had a decisive influence upon Wagner's outlook upon life. Goethe was open to suggestions from all the realms of nature. His theory of color, his contributions to the systematization of plants and his discovery of the *os intermaxillare,* a bone with an important bearing on physiological theory, are famous. Wagner, though he became interested in politics in the

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year 1848 (if only as a "dreamy revolutionary"), wove himself more and more deeply into the web of his imagination, which established his kinship with his visionary patron. In spite of his increasing concern with the purely spiritual, Goethe did not leave the terrain of the real until he wrote the conclusion of the second part of "Faust," his last drama. Wagner is, in most of his work, far aloof from reality. For this very reason he seems, when viewed in historical perspective, much more time-bound than Goethe. This is particularly true today, when conditions fairly compel one to be matter-of-fact, leaving imagination little room and giving idealism none at all save where this proceeds not from the head of a poet but from objective reality. In France the leading group of "Six" made repudiation of Wagner a program; in Germany he was the object of bitter attacks. The most recent composers of music for the theatre have in part abandoned even the undeniable advantages of the music drama. Music has become more and more independent of the text and its explication, and in both Germany and France there already exist a number of operas in which may be found again independent solo or ensemble numbers in the manner of the old arias, et cetera, which Wagner despised although occasionally—witness the "Preislied"—he too wrote them.

The decline of Wagner's reputation is attributable partly to the tragedy of all genius: the tragedy of attaining a height beyond which it is impossible to go. One is here reminded of the sentence, "The names of authors are like passing bells." In its way "Tristan," for example, was simply a culmination. The great composers who followed, all of them for a time disciples of Wagner, *had* therefore to free themselves from his influence in order to develop their own powers and bent of mind. Even the most famous of these, Richard Strauss, although once he created a stir by being "converted" to Wagner, has today again retreated from that discipleship. But in the case of Wagner the change of mood has also a particular cause. It is undeniable that he overloaded music with thought. This was due, first of all, to his great concern with the text. But it was also caused by a thoroughly romantic confusion of art genres. The *Gesamtkunstwerk* was, he decided, to blend music, poetry and plastic art into a unit. Goethe remained too closely in contact with actuality to permit his being enticed, by fascinating ideas, away from the necessities immanent in the objective. But even idealistically speaking, another romantic confusion of Wagner's was untenable—the concept of the priest-poet, as this is manifested in "Parsifal," where Wagner sought to make of the Grail scenes a kind of religious liturgy. Here two realms of being which belong to entirely different orders are mated. Anyone who knows the ontological gulf which lies between the heights of divine wisdom and the plains of human beauty will never make the error of confusing a servant of the first with a servant of the second.

Americans will probably not see Wagner in quite so problematical a light as that in which I have viewed him here. But our time is so very different from that of Wagner's that what remains problematical in him comes noticeably to the fore. And so the history of Wagnerian music becomes a part of general cultural history. Yet it would be a grave manifestation of one's own estrangement from reality to proceed to doubt the significance of Wagner as an artist. The best proof to the contrary is the extraordinary admiration which Anton Bruckner entertained for the Master of Bayreuth—an admiration based, of course, only on the essentially musical in Wagner. Wagner cannot be sundered even in thought from the development of music, so mightily did he affect it. His influence abides even where more recent eras are obliged to believe that he was mistaken. For from every point of view he discovered new land, faced new tasks, and illuminated (even when negatively) the purposes of art with the light of his genius. And today when the *Neue Sachlichkeit* has already fallen a victim to the opposite error and is too patently devoid of thought and emotion, we have more reason than ever, in the midst of the sober every-day, to rejoice both in the idealization of the real which is the habit of Goethe's art and in the realization of the ideal which is that of Wagner's music.

THE CATHEDRAL

By FRANCES BOARDMAN

THE cathedral flanks one side of the triangular field upon which my windows give. It really is a field, in spite of lying at the convergence of two long city thoroughfares, each of which carries an endless stream of motor traffic. Some day, I believe, it is to become a park, but in the meantime there is something sturdy and comfortable in the present expanse of rough grass, casually cut through, at serviceable angles, by footpaths. In the spring boys with kites find it a great flying-field, and later it accommodates an informal baseball diamond.

Fronting the very edge of a high plateau, a sort of urban promontory overlooking the city's more practical precincts, the cathedral enjoys that rarest of privileges in a town landscape: a skyline intact. Always the massive walls and mighty dome may be seen in uninterrupted outline against the heavens, and there is no trick of light, no bit of atmospheric sorcery, which does not provoke its instant, peculiar, and never-to-be-repeated reaction from the aspect of the building.

On cloudless days, silhouetted against an intense morning blue, every detail of the architect's vision, every trace of the mason's chisel, is thrown into bright photographic relief, and the coldly reticent green of the copper plating on roof and dome looks like wet jade. Later, the declining day spends hours in imperceptibly softening outlines, and in soothing the sharper differences between light and shade, insidiously adding gracious rose and gold pigments to the grey of the stone before it surrenders the whole matter to advancing darkness. The mists of autumn do unbelievably lovely and wistful things to the picture, especially with the help of a heavy orange moon. In winter, the enduring frosts of this northern latitude lend a meretricious softness to stone angles and surfaces, and it takes another kind of lunar light, the icy radiance of a waxing moon, to achieve exquisite effects of faery "Erlkönigs Töchter am düstern

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Ort!"—while, seen at night through lightly falling snow, with the great rose windows transformed into medallions of veiled amber in token that there are prayers within, it becomes the complete collective illustration of legendary charm.

There was a late afternoon last summer when the whole eastern firmament was one great terrifying thunderhead, while the declining sun shot a blaze of light from the west. The stone of the cathedral, caught between the two, wore an unearthly bronze-yellow color, and the gilded cross above the dome was fairly aflame, as though defying the hosts of darkness.

I like the great building best in the early morning, in that moment or two of static stillness, with a flat crepuscular wash over everything, just before the portent of dawn becomes the reality of sunrise. Across the dark, level, deserted field it has a look of immemorial age and patience, and seems to have an identity of its own, to belong to itself for the little space before it becomes necessary to resume the functions of a house of faith, and of a great jewel in the landscape.

The feeling that this particular scene arouses is closely bound up with my most poignant experience of the cathedral's interior. I have seen it often as the background for splendid ceremonial pageantry, with the light of the sun and the light of the candles shining together on sumptuous displays of color, but none of these impressions is so deeply engraved as that of a certain early December evening when the body of a much-loved archbishop lay in state within the sanctuary rail. There was, throughout the great dim reaches of the building, that same two-dimensional film of grey, a flat twilight unbroken by any visible beams except those of the six tall funerary tapers. Their flames supplied the picture's single visual climax.

Gradually I grew aware of an auditory counterpart to the effect. Its background, too, was grey, made by the soft, ceaseless, monotonous footsteps of the hundreds who came to pay sorrowful homage, and to pray that the angels might lead him into paradise. Suddenly, against the faint, steady rustle of sound there came the sharp click of sword-points on marble: the guard of honor was genuflecting, on its retirement before the relief vigil. There, again, was that concentrated sensory focus. Soon the sanctuary was filled with priests, and the office was being sonorously read by dark, grave voices whose cumulative effect was, once more, that of an evenly diffused monochromatic tone. It came to a close, and then, unexpectedly, from the sanctuary stalls rose the clear, light voices of boys singing a poignantly harmonized "Miserere." For the third time it was as though the hope of life had pierced the shadow of death.

Something of all these memories lingers in the early morning mien of the cathedral, but the moment for realizing it soon passes, and I see the busy little sexton hurrying across the field to unlock the doors. Presently there are signs that the first of the day's Masses is drawing its quota of worshipers.

The parish is very large, and on Sunday throngs surge in and out from daybreak until past noon. Watching them, I, an outsider, am mainly conscious of deep gratitude for the fact that so great a number of people can find comfort anywhere in the sad, confused darkness of these times. I know that many and many a one of the worshipers is the victim of crushing circumstance, and it is hard to see how or why faith can survive. But it does, and the church stands there, unshakably steadfast, ready to explain and sustain.

A year of proximity to such a neighbor has unfolded many things. I realize in how superficial a sense the cathedral is only seventeen years old, for it is the idea of timelessness which inheres so deeply in the whole visible establishment. All its recurrent functions and dramatic cycles move with such ordered pace, such inevitability of momentum, as to testify to an underlying philosophy which is satisfied to borrow its rhythms from nothing less enduring than eternity itself. Dating its own life from the unimaginable beginning of things, the church looks back upon unnumbered temporal mile-posts; it has seen and survived all the incredible ways in which men write their stumbling history, and it will see and survive many more. "This, too, shall pass," it says compassionately—the only one of all the world's voices which can add to pronouncement the authority of experience.

COMMUNICATIONS

THESES AND TEACHERS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: My belief is that in the study of literature, the student should keep always in immediate contact with the masterpiece and by its analysis and appreciation cultivate his taste, crystallize and ennoble his ideals, mastering the art of composition under the guidance of the best authors. Fine self-expression of the student's own experience will be the goal of the study and will be the evidence of his education. So Isocrates taught, and from his school went out forty known orators of eminence and as many teachers, says Cicero, as the Greeks issuing from the wooden horse of Troy. So Cicero and Horace and Virgil were themselves taught and then pointed out the same path to others. So Quintilian and Saint Augustine practised and preached. The Jesuit Plan of Studies and all the Renaissance schools had no history of literature. In fact the history of literature as a distinct study is a modern product and quite a recent product. The modern slogan would seem to be: Know all about literature, but do nothing about it.

A teacher once roundly asserted that she could not teach a composition-book which had numerous examples of English, because she would have to know the lives and histories of every author and of everyone mentioned in the many quotations. A student was noticed pinning down the text of "Macbeth" so that her attention, she said, might not be distracted from the notes. These are extreme instances of the modern historic approach to literature, where "Macbeth" becomes a footnote to the history of Scotland, while in reality Scotland and all the background of "Macbeth" and even of Shakespeare should disappear in the universal realities of human nature which form the shining foreground of the tragedy. Homer and Shakespeare, like all good poets, are "hidden in the light of thought." Anne Hathaway and Homeric ship-building are impertinences. If history and erudition enlighten and interest, they may be of some aid to art, but when made an end in themselves they are sciences and have no place in the classroom of literature. The history of literature belongs in the class of history. Perhaps Mr. John Flynn may achieve there the rich results he hopes for. I sincerely trust his history of literature will produce the writers which have come in the past from the study and imitation of the masterpieces.

After all how is it possible that historical facts can make writers? You train what you train, and though it is not very easy to tell everything in a man's make up which is exercised and trained even in the lifting of a little finger, still it is safe to say that facts whether about authors or about "sealing wax and kings" do not of themselves train the mind to think, and the reason to conclude, and the imagination to picture, and the taste to select, and the judgment to criticize, and the ear to hear silent harmonies, or the tongue to voice audible harmonies. The only way to train all these powers is to understand how the great writers exercised them and to make the student out of

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his own experience judge and reason and imagine and select and order. His meager experience will indeed be enriched by the history of everything as well as of literature. Were he however endowed with encyclopaedic information, the possession of facts is no guarantee of their clear expression, much less of their forceful or interesting presentation. The teaching of science differs from the teaching of art, and history is a science and literature is an art.

Perhaps all teachers and all histories of education are wrong, as another correspondent in the same issue with Mr. Flynn would seem to infer. In his opinion all writers are born and not made. A course in Mr. Flynn's history of literature and an acquaintance with the facts of the case would show him that writers are made. Father Frederick Faber of the Oratory held that all men were born poets but that not all found it out. As one who has been more than fifty years in a classroom, I can safely assert that many do find out that they are born writers but that it takes an immense amount of toil to make them find it out. Most born writers yield to indolence and hire the industrious students to act as their secretaries.

REV. FRANCIS P. DONNELLY, S.J.

NEW LIGHT ON BIRTH CONTROL

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor: In his article, "New Light on Birth Control," in your issue of March 8, Mr. Frank A. Smothers points out that there are "at least two very important" difficulties, apart from its scientific verification, which prevent the Ogino-Knaus data being regarded "as anything approaching a complete solution" of the problem of birth control. Number one is the "possibility of extraordinary ovulation which may occur as the consequence of physical excitement." Number two is the necessity for woman playing a "passive, drab and distasteful rôle in marriage."

But are these simultaneous difficulties? As I understand it, if number one is disproved, as Mr. Smothers admits it may be, both are removed. And if it is not, they are still only alternate difficulties; for if the woman plays the passive rôle comprehended in number two there will be no physical excitement, and consequently no possibility of extraordinary ovulation.

Mr. Smothers then goes on to make a third point: that it would be inconsistent with the ideals of matrimony to restrict marital relations to the period which might be least desirable for the woman. But is it not generally acknowledged that the period of greatest desire for the woman, is at and near the menses—the precise period indicated by the Ogino-Knaus data?

However, all this is rather academic; but there is a further point which is not. And it is this: while proof of number one would keep the Ogino-Knaus method from being a "complete solution," it might yet be just as complete a solution as contraception—possibly even more complete—for it is generally admitted that no contraceptive is altogether certain. All this quibbling about lack of absolute certainty, then, which has been the burden of more than one recent article, would seem to be irrelevant; at least as respects the availability of the Ogino-Knaus method as an antidote for contraception.

There is one other question, however, which I have seen raised by no one save Canon Coucke; and that is, how reliable is the analogical argument from the beast by which it is contended that spermatazoa are capable of fertilizing for only forty-eight hours? Or is there some other evidence on which this conclusion is based?

EDWARD HEFFRON.

LOTS FOR LITTLE

St. James, L. I.

TO the Editor: There are probably so many good Catholics in or about New York City who do not know of one of the most beneficial yet simple of Catholic charities that a few lines about its importance seem very fitting. The name of this organization is the Lots for Little Thrift Shop, Inc. It is located at 902 Third Avenue, between 54th and 55th Streets.

I find it difficult to overestimate the good a thrift shop of the kind of Lots for Little does. In the first place, if you become a donor, you clear your house or your wardrobe of that mass of accumulated clutter the sight of which is so maddening. In the second place, if you should become a buyer, you may find at the Lots for Little anything, fairly priced, from fifteenth-century furniture to clothes, shoes, jewelry, paintings, and everything-under-the-sun. In the third place, you will have the satisfaction of contributing to or buying from a second-hand shop which enjoys the blessing of Cardinal Hayes and whose proceeds support the following four splendid organizations: the Helpers of the Holy Souls Convent, the Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries, the Cardinal Gibbons Institute, and the Barat Settlement. The first and the last are in New York City. The Helpers of the Holy Souls nurse the sick-poor, hold classes for children, maintain clubs for boys and girls, and make distributions of food and coal. The Barat Settlement runs a kindergarten, clubs, a girl scouts' organization, provides to send children to the country, and runs bread, milk, and relief stations. The Cardinal Gibbons Institute helps the Negroes in a poor district in Maryland, at Ridge. Its work is the training of the Negro youth in vocational work so that they may become useful members of society. The Catholic Medical Missionaries is unique in being the first community of the sort, which has houses in Washington and London and already has had the greatest success in India.

When you next want to dispose of old things, be they objects artistic or utilitarian, for which you no longer have any use, remember this thrift shop that will call for any packages within the city limits. At this moment it needs your support very much. Remember, too, that although its name, from the mercantile point of view is beautifully chosen, it also derives lots *from* little. That is, when you support it, you support four charities. Catholics can hardly do more with one gift.

JAMES W. LANE.

NATURE AND THE PROHIBITIONIST

Hampton Falls, N. H.

TO the Editor: I enjoyed Mr. Stone's article, both from the viewpoint of an anti-prohibitionist and a naturalist. He might well have gone one step farther and told us of the appreciation of fermented fruit juices in nature among birds and beasts; for on farms where cider is pressed, great caution is necessary in order to maintain total abstinence among the domestic birds and animals. Where apple pomace is dumped in piles and allowed to ferment under the autumn sun, cows, pigs and poultry show no sense of discretion when the chance offers to gorge themselves on it, and anyone who has ever seen a staid old muley cow attempting to be playful and sportive on legs too weak to support her weight, will never forget the sight, or that of a flock of poultry staggering homeward toward the pen after an afternoon of carousel, and attempting one after another to fly up to the roost and to maintain a foothold once they have succeeded in getting there.

I think it was in one of Dr. C. C. Abbott's books that I first

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learned of the robin's habit of getting inebriated on the juice of the garget or poke berry. Since then I have more than once witnessed the whole performance in the woodland just as summer is lapsing into autumn. The purple-juiced berries of this bush are often used in making wine, and evidently pass through a stage of fermentation when allowed to hang on the bushes until overripe. It is at this stage that the robins come in flocks to gather them and after the first few potions show every symptom of intoxication. You may see a party of them leave the poke-berry patch in reeling flight and unsuccessfully attempting one after another to alight on the low branch of some nearby tree, all the time uttering notes such as I have never found attributed to their species in any book on birds.

Mr. Stone speaks of the Indians as having fermented liquor, which is unquestionably true of the tribes of South America, Central America and the Southwestern portions of this country, but from all that I can learn the red men of these Northeastern states were innocent of anything of the kind, though they raised corn and pumpkins and had wild grapes, poke berries and elder berries in the woods about them. The fact of their having practised total abstinence before the white men came, has often been used as a perfectly logical explanation of their falling victims to intoxication from the white man's drink when it was offered them; for (as has been observed in all ages) anyone who has never tasted anything of the sort is in the greatest danger.

WILLIAM EVERETT CRAM.

QUESTIONS OF SCIENCE

East Chicago, Ind.

TO the Editor: In the editorial column of THE COMMONWEAL for March 1, the reader is put under the impression that a strenuous opposition exists between Drs. Millikan and Compton on their views about the cosmic rays. That at least is the impression I gather from the words used by the writer, namely "their advocacy of their own opinion and denial of the opinion of the opponent was strenuous enough, etc." Now I heard Dr. Compton lecture on cosmic rays for an hour before an audience of 800 scientific men and women, and during that whole hour he certainly did not strenuously advocate his own opinion or strenuously oppose Dr. Millikan's opinion. He merely stated, in an objective manner, the findings and opinions (among them those of Abbé Lemaître) of four or five groups of investigators of cosmic rays. In fact he used the pronoun "I" but once in the whole lecture. In my opinion his lecture was a model of modesty and objective presentation.

It has been my observation that whenever Catholics are in any way identified with any scientific work, it is the policy of Catholic papers to belittle the non-Catholic investigators whilst at the same time they are trying to give undue credit to the Catholic investigators. It has happened often enough that Catholic papers have sung the praises of certain scientists merely because they thought that the scientists were Catholics, whereas they were far from being Catholic, e. g., Madame Curie, whom one non-Catholic author says is really an enemy of religion. I know of one case in which Catholic papers openly accused a non-Catholic scientist of stealing an idea from a Catholic scientist, both of whom I know to be very friendly toward each other.

Methods of this sort do not benefit our holy religion. In fact they do much harm. If our Catholic publicists were to imitate the objectivity of Dr. Compton they would be accomplishing some real good for our faith.

REV. J. A. BICK.

PONDERINGS OF A PH.D.

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor: To call myself a doctor of philosophy is, indeed, indulging in the previous. For although I have been two years on the road to that degree, there is yet a way to go. True, I have passed the milestones of the language examinations; the written examinations in the first and second minors respectively; there still remains the public, comprehensive oral, or the oral public comprehensive. No matter. Unlike a jig-saw puzzle the words fit in any sequence. I did not come to the university to get a degree, but to get a thorough appreciation of English and American literature as a background for future writing. But because the university wanted only those students that wanted degrees, I signed on the dotted line: Candidate for the doctorate in the department of English. As a result I have studied Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, English and German philology until my dreams are filled with ablauts and umlauts, West Germanic geminations, syncopations, assimilations, palitalizations, and I think, "Damnation, is a degree worth all this to me?"

My thesis is a congenial one. For two years I have lived most intimately with it. Now that I must write the result of my investigations in the approved form of accuracy, force and charm, I find that I am only accurate. My force and charm—if I ever possessed them—are gone. My day-dreams are gone. Perhaps my youth is gone, too. Shall I drop the whole thing? But this is sentimental tripe. I must pull myself together, and if I cannot write forcefully and charmingly, write as forcefully and charmingly as I can. Getting a doctorate is perhaps the chastening experience that I need. And when the Ph.D. is mine, I can put it away with canceled cheques and the like and be myself again. Shall I persist or shall I not?

"What shall I doe? I know not what to doe,
Where shall I runne, oh runne? I cannot goe.
Where shall I goe, oh goe? I cannot stirre."

KEVIN MAUGHAN.

AN OPINION WORTH HAVING

Norwalk, Conn.

TO the Editor: The difference between the Protestant theory of private judgment and the Catholic theory of the supremacy of conscience is simply that the first is democratic and the second aristocratic. The democrat argues, "My opinion is as good as yours." This is bunk. Before an opinion is worth having, it must rest, besides, on intuition, on study, on analysis, on experience, in fine, on cerebral sweat.

The genius? A possible exception: but are all democrats geniuses?

DONALD POWELL.

DISTURBANCES OF THE WEEK

Minneapolis, Minn.

TO the Editor: In THE COMMONWEAL of February 1, in your article, "Disturbances of the Week," you speak of Senator Norbeck as the Senator from North Dakota. The gentleman is a Senator from South Dakota, which state is beginning to see the light of day in some respects that bear on the financial side.

I know this must have been an oversight on your part. I would like to have the opportunity to say how much I enjoy THE COMMONWEAL.

ARTHUR EVANS.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

One Sunday Afternoon

THIS play by James Hagan is one of those uncommon delights, a simple narrative play about simple people written and acted with authentic feeling and understanding and an expert sense of the theatre. In some respects it is not unlike that extraordinarily fine English play of a few seasons back, "Many Waters," in that it carries the sense of that sound and robust romance which comes from meeting realities with a soaring spirit. But it is less pretentious than "Many Waters," less obviously written to prove an idea, and simpler in its design. This is the kind of play to which the title, "Design for Living," really belongs. It is a play of adjustment to life, and not, as Mr. Coward's famous treatise, a tale of living death.

"One Sunday Afternoon" appeared upon the Broadway scene almost as unheralded as last year's leading success, "Another Language." There are very few well-known actors in the cast. Leo Bulgakov, the director of the production, is probably better known than any member of the cast he selected, but even Bulgakov is associated chiefly with the very serious and aspiring production of Russian plays rather than with the popular American theatre. The critics, however, proving once and for all their essential fairness and independence, greeted the play with ardor and a sigh of relief. They found it hard to describe, because of its essential simplicity. But it charmed them, and they were very willing to cheer it on with lusty encouragement.

The play begins in the present, then jumps back twenty-five years or more—thus recalling in form as well as substance "Many Waters"—and ends with the continuation of the first scene. That first episode is in a dentist's office adjoining his home in a small Mid-Western town. The dentist, known in his youth as "Biff" Grimes, because of his hasty temper expressed in a strong fist, is having a few nips of Scotch with "Snappy" Downer. They are recalling their youth, with increasing unsteadiness, sentimentality and close harmony, much to the annoyance of Amy Grimes, whose wifely voice is heard from time to time through an open door into the house. It is a lazy Sunday afternoon. Biff, enjoying his musical reverie, becomes more convinced, with each successive drink, that he should have married Virginia Brush instead of Amy Lind, and "Snappy" bears him out. But Virginia, it seems, married the detestable Hugo Barnstead, who had plenty of money and has since become a country bank president. Biff can never forgive Hugo. He would like nothing better than to get his hands around Hugo's neck. The phone rings. The hotel across the street has a guest suffering from toothache. Will Dr. Grimes extract the tooth? No. But it is a real emergency, and the patient is a prominent visitor—one Hugo Barnstead. Yes, Dr. Grimes will gladly extract his tooth! The first scene closes with Hugo Barnstead in the chair, and Biff Grimes about to put the resentment of years into pulling that tooth.

We are then carried back to the days when Biff was an awkward boy of the town, and into the fashions, the parks and the beer gardens of the early nineteen hundreds. We begin to see what manner of girl was Virginia Brush and how it happened that Biff married Amy instead. We see their early struggles, Biff's explosion when Hugo Barnstead was made his boss at the box factory, and Biff's arrest and imprisonment on the false suspicion that he intended murder. We see the reunion of Amy and Biff after his return from prison, and the start of his effort to rebuild a handicapped life. We discover Amy's true worth for ourselves, after the author has purposely given us a quite opposite idea in the first scene. We understand the interpenetration of Biff's and Amy's lives.

Then we are switched back to the opening scene. Virginia, bored and artificial, comes into the office while Hugo is still under the gas. One look at her is enough to break Biff's distorted and romantic memories. He yanks out the Barnstead tooth, shoves husband and wife and the obtrusive Snappy out of his office, calls for Amy, and carries her off triumphantly in his arms to a taxicab he has called from the window. There is no more to the play than this. Nothing more than false memory conquered by honest reality. But in its masterly handling of character, its apt dialogue and simple sincerity of feeling, it is a small masterpiece. Lloyd Nolan as Biff and Francesca Bruning as Amy give unforgettable performances backed by an excellently directed cast. (At the Forty-eighth Street Theatre.)

Three-Cornered Moon

"THREE-CORNERED MOON," by a new and wholly unknown playwright named Gertrude Tonkonogy, is another of the season's pleasant surprises, and another play of the simple family order. In it, the three Rimplegar brothers and their sister and mother, a young doctor and an aspiring poet and novelist work out, each in his or her own way, the problem of adjusting to a complete wiping out of the modest family fortune. The Rimplegars are half Russian, on their father's side, which gives them plenty of excuse for a temperamental and verbal display far beyond the limitations of Main Street. Young intellectuals and moody shirkers, for the most part, in the first act, the discovery that their none too bright and exceedingly irrelevant mother has lost the entire family inheritance in the stock market explodes like the crash of doomsday.

The author has drawn some of the best assorted and most amusing characters to be seen on our stage today. Nothing happens quite as you would expect it to happen, largely due to the amazing behavior at all times of Mrs. Rimplegar. Her complete innocence of everything except ways of treating imaginary diseases, her utter aloofness from all realities, her patient dumbness and her ability to say the wrong thing on every crucial occasion make her a priceless stage figure. Nothing could equal her advice to the young doctor on a method of curing his headache: "Just lie down on the bed, relax by stretching your arms far above your head, and give yourself an alcohol rub!" She bought stock because the young man who sold it to her was so "enthusiastic" she was certain it must be good. Neither wind nor waves nor time could change her. But the rest of the family change mightily, not by formula, but each in a highly individual way. Even the thread of romance is handled with a dozen novel and deft turns. The play has originality, wit and sparkle and a generous dose of skilfully administered common sense. It provides a highly refreshing evening of diverting theatre.

Ruth Gordon is at her familiar best as the daughter, and Cecilia Loftus is simply incomparable as the unforgettable mother. The brothers Rimplegar are most competently handled by John Eldredge, Ben Lackland and Elisha Cook, jr. Brian Donlevy is excellent as the common-sensical doctor who always understands more than you would expect. But one of the major performances for skill, in a most difficult part, is that of Richard Whorf as the neurotic and slightly tragic young novelist who cannot bring himself to work in an office even when his friends are starving and he himself is living on the few crumbs they can spare. Mr. Whorf makes this egotistical character thoroughly believable and almost pathetic. There is, of course, something of Mrs. Rimplegar's own amiable madness in the title of the play. (At the Cort Theatre.)

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BOOKS

Meta-History

The Modern Theme, by José Ortega y Gasset. New York: W. W. Norton Company. $2.00.

DON JOSÉ ORTEGA Y GASSET has an unusual triple opportunity to speak: from the chair of metaphysics at the University of Madrid, from the rostrum of the Spanish Parliament, and from his editorial desk, through the *Revista de Occidente.*

His well-merited vogue in the United States began only recently, with the translation of "The Revolt of the Masses," now in its fifth printing in a few months. That first introduction of Ortega to American readers was a brilliant analysis of the phenomenon of "crowds" not only physically present everywhere, but affecting all the complexities of civilization by what he calls the "crowd" or the "mass" mind, by which he means a standardized way of thinking or acting in all social classes.

It is interesting that a generation which has forgotten our own Brownell, Irving Babbitt, Paul Elmer More and the least read of our greatest searchers, Henry Adams, should receive this Spanish thinker with such avid enthusiasm, for of all peoples we fit most exactly into his classification of "the mass mind."

The same publishers who made a successful introduction of his thought, follow it now with this small volume, "The Modern Theme," in which Ortega passes from a general analysis to his own theory of life, in a series of essays drawn from his university lectures. It is expected that this, in turn, will be followed by a fuller exposition of the implications of his philosophy in science, art, literature and practical polities.

He is reminiscent, in "The Modern Theme," of Henry Adams's tour de force, the "Rule of Phase Applied to History," which is the climax of Brooks Adams's "Degradation of the Democratic Dogma," that jewel of a book brought out in 1920. Ortega supports, supplements and infuses life into Henry Adams's search. Adams resents the exclusion of history from "the sciences" in our university systems. Ortega claims legitimate place for "a new scientific system which might be called meta-history, which would bear the same relation to concrete histories as physiology to the clinic." "History has room for prophecy"; "the labor of history is only scientific in proportion to the place that prophecy can occupy in it"; "science is only possible when some ascertainable law exists"; but, since (according to Ortega) an ascertainable law does exist in history: "it is possible to admit a science of history."

That is precisely Ortega's "theme." It is often difficult to gather from Henry Adams's writings just how he believes in God, in Truth; in what manner he sees life. It was not even easy for those who had the privilege of his friendship. There is no such doubt in Ortega. He believes Truth to be ascertainable. He is the apostle of the "immanent value" of life. He claims that insufficient value has been given in the past to life itself, quite apart (for example) from the value of earthly life as a preparatory stage for the future, better life of Christian teaching; quite contrary to the conception of earthly life as an evil to be surmounted and eventually extinguished in the Buddhist's universality of Nirvana.

He holds that recognition of immanent value in life is the "modern theme." It must be used. His present studies approach the manner in which this definite phase of human history shall best accomplish its mission for civilization.

He is searching the same field as Oswald Spengler, but with

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NEXT WEEK

JOBS FOR THE UNEMPLOYED, by Frank A. Whiteley, brilliantly demonstrates on the basis of the fundamental law of our land that, since our government was instituted to secure the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, of which the right to a job is an indispensable element, it must be the province and duty of the government to discover and impose a method of creating and distributing jobs. The writer explains fully what he believes to be the one way the government could effectively accomplish this object. . . . THE BELLS OF SAN JACINTO, by Don Marquis, the story which begins in this issue of the magazine, will be continued next week; it will be concluded the week following. . . . SHEED AND WARD, by Michael Williams, tells of a publishing firm which has recently opened a branch in the United States, of the publishing enterprise which it has shown and of the high quality of the writers which it has successfully presented. This is a record of memorable and enduring contributions in the rugged, everlasting struggle to hew out intellectual advancement and a promise of more decent things for civilized people. . . . GEORGE MOORE, by Thomas J. Lynch, is a critical analysis of a writer whose works are now finished.

banners high. He is more immediately positive in his conclusions than Walter Lippmann, who for the present seems not to get beyond his examination of weakness and evil in our generation.

Krutch's "The Modern Temper" may not be left out of such a comparison as this, for that little book is the most faithful contemporary description we have produced of the regretful helplessness and lassitude of the pseudo-intellectual, whom Ortega has isolated, examined and classified like some microscopic germ, both in his "Revolt" and in his "epilogue on the mental attitude of disillusion" in "The Modern Theme." With that "epilogue" belongs of necessity to the upbuilding of Ortega's philosophy, his brief essay on "the historical significance of the theory of Einstein."

Whether many agree with these things or not, Ortega's studies have importance to us as Americans and Catholics. As Americans we have allowed our "aristocratic" conception of democracy to give way to the "mass" idea of democracy evolved in Europe's industrial proletariat. It might reasonably be claimed that this is one of the world's great misfortunes. It is an even greater world calamity that we Catholics, who possess the fulness of continuity with the past and who are thereby in the best position to utilize the best in old and new for the best interest of evolutionary civilization, have chosen to discard it all in America and merge ourselves in that antithesis of civilization which Ortega calls "the mass mind."

There is, at this moment, much searching for cause of "Catholic leakage," of "inactivity of laymen." Might some light be found in Ortega's analysis of conditions—even if many will not agree with his conclusions?

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

"Papa" Joffre

The Personal Memoirs of Marshal Joffre; translated by Colonel T. Bentley Mott. New York: Harper and Brothers. Two volumes, $6.00.

WHEN the final history of the Great War comes to be written, the "Memoirs of Marshal Joffre" will certainly be one of the basic sources. It is not a brilliant book, but it is a book which bears the authentic stamp of its author.

Joffre's initial miscalculation of German strength and his consequent disbelief in any extended sweep through Belgium almost cost the Allies the war, but the superb way in which he recovered from his error and the magnificent strategy of his counter-stroke, will make his name immortal. It was a triumph of character rather than genius, and in reading his posthumous memoirs the same quality is apparent. Of course Joffre is human, and while he acknowledges his first terrible mistake, he tries to show that it was almost unavoidable, and as a corollary fails to give full justice to the more clear-seeing view of General Lanrezac.

Lanrezac in those days of August that were just prior to Charleroi continually warned Joffre of the German attack through Belgium, and though even he did not realize its full extent, he saw the futility of Plan XVII. In his "Memoirs" Joffre shows his annoyance at Lanrezac's protests, and it is a pity that he doesn't make atonement for his misjudgment. Lanrezac was truly a tragic figure. His lack of self-confidence and his unwillingness to coöperate with the British unquestionably made his removal by Joffre necessary. But though his preparation for Charleroi was inadequate, his order for the retreat was given in time and his handling of the retreat itself masterly. And he did see where the Germans were to attack, which Joffre

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did not. His was a failure of character, rather than of innate ability. And though in his volume Joffre praises his ability, it would have been better had he more explicity acknowledged his own misjudgment and the rightness of Lanrezac's initial view.

But with this exception the "Memoirs" is an admirable work, a work well balanced in view, expressed with modesty and with strength, and if never brilliant in writing, informed with a splendid reserve power. His characterizations of the various generals under him is keen and just, though perhaps he ignores a little the terrible toll in blood which Foch's belief in the offensive entailed.

The story of the gathering opposition of the politicians is told without bitterness, and his removal is accepted with a minimum of upbraiding. Had he remained in command, the tragedy of Nivelle's offensive would have been avoided and the morale of the army as well as the increased number of its effectives might very well have prevented Ludendorffs's break-through in 1918. Yet Joffre does not even mention this possibility. He accepts his dismissal with the courage which might be expected from the man who made possible the miracle of the Marne.

The final chapters of the book are devoted to his trip to America. How great was his part here in causing Wilson to throw the whole weight of our army into the scale is known, yet he never refers to it directly. In his book as in his life, Joffre is as modest as he is serene.

GRENVILLE VERNON.

The Progressive Mind

Farewell to Reform, by John Chamberlain. New York: Liveright. $3.50.

THERE is a long subtitle to Mr. Chamberlain's book which defines it as "a history of the rise, life, and decay of the progressive mind in America." As the "progressive mind" in America was, more or less, with me, in the words of the late Mr. Crothers, "an honorable point of ignorance," and moreover I did not particularly like the discouraging, if not portentous, suggestion that it was now dead, I opened this book with misgivings, knowing full well that I was but a lay reader in a "field" not at all my own.

Mr. Chamberlain's English, a language which I have tried to learn for lo! these many years, held my attentive admiration from the first sentence. His book is extraordinarily well written, and its good writing is but one of its splendid characteristics. My reading of his pages was necessarily slow and careful, for his book is a rich mine of information, much of which, at least in a coherent and orderly form, was new to me. It begins with a critical survey of the elements of political and economic reform in the nineties, sketching those men and movements which sought for a squarer deal; it continues throughout the new century down to 1917 with the entrance of America into the Great War; it concludes with a final chapter entitled, "Foray," which sums up the results of the so-called progressive years, takes frank account of the present era, and presages none too brightly the next half-century in its social and economic aspects.

This is a book of the greatest interest and value, even to a lay mind like my own, ignorant and always uncertain as to ways and means of attaining justice or even decency. The humor and humorous insight of its author keep it from undue prejudice and lack of balance. Its character sketches are both acute and fair. Especially to be admired are those of Theodore Roosevelt and fighting Bob La Follette of Wisconsin.

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THE RHYTHM

of Sterility and Fertility in Women

A Discussion of the Physiological, Practical and Ethical Aspects of the Discoveries of Drs. K. Ogino (Japan) and H. Knaus (Austria) Regarding the Periods when Conception is Impossible and when Possible, by

LEO J. LATZ, A.B., B.S., M.D.

Member of the staffs of Loyola University Medical School and Alexian Brother's Hospital; Lecturer at St. Elizabeth Hospital and Mercy Hospital Training Schools for Nurses; Secretary of the Cosmas and Damian Associates of Chicago.

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Of preëminent interest, to me at least, are the several chapters which sketch the fiction of the reform period, between 1902 and 1917, those novels which in one way or another reflected the social, political and economic agitations of their day. Howells, Garland, Winston Churchill, Dreiser, William Allen White, Upton Sinclair, Steffens, Ernest Poole—these men and their work receive careful and critical attention. And in treating them Mr. Chamberlain shows a remarkable breadth of reading and thinking which alone makes his book a noteworthy contribution to the history of American criticism.

All in all, the reading of his book has been to me a major experience in my own reading and thinking; and I commend it heartily to all who want to know more about the larger issues of the past and who possess at least an open and an eager mind toward problems of the near future.

MARY ELLEN CHASE.

A Successful Novel

Green Doors, by Ethel Cook Eliot. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. $2.00.

FROM a purely artistic point of view, Mrs. Eliot's latest novel is definitely successful. The characterization, though sometimes sketchy, is always well done. In the case of Clare Farwell, brilliant, pseudo-spiritual, and completely self-deceived, it is masterful. The deftly constructed plot increases in interest throughout, and is admirably resolved in the last chapter. There is a charming love story, and the descriptions show that fresh awareness of sensuous beauty which often accompanies spiritual insight.

But the author of "Ariel Dances" has given us in her new book something more significant than another highly readable story. She has given us that hitherto almost unknown thing, an adult Catholic novel of modern American life. It does not deal with impossible though edifying conversions. It does not argue and it does not preach. With subtlety and restraint it reveals in action the influence of a girl who is perfectly commonplace, except that she happens to be a saint. We catch only a glimpse of her until the final scene, and indeed a critic might plausibly object that, since Teresa Kerr is the real heroine, we ought to hear less about her and to see more of her.

Yet after all it is not Teresa herself but her influence on others that is the main theme, a theme completely in the background at first, and which remains a thing of hints and mystery, to be fully understood only in the final scene. So the story becomes one to be thought over afterward, and the reader who does so should find more than the "touch of Roman Catholic faith and philosophy" that one reveiwer has noted with patronizing tolerance. For in this apparently slight novel is a power which is none other than the power of Divine Love, and we watch this power at work, healing where psychiatry has failed, bringing strength and joy to those who respond to it, and casting a tragic light on the woman who scorns it, from the proud little hell of her self-deception.

Reviewers, when they understand "Green Doors" at all, are likely to accuse the author of bending her characters to the exigencies of her Catholicism, for it is axiomatic with many of them that people motivated by Catholic principles are necessarily unreal. But Catholic readers ought to recognize the beauty and power of the book. If, after all our talk about the need of really artistic Catholic fiction, we do not encourage Mrs. Eliot to give us more, we will be revealing our own insincerity, besides missing an inspiring experience.

T. LAWRASON RIGGS.

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Gleaming Gold

Come Easy, Go Easy, by Arthur Mason. New York: John Day Company. $2.00.

THIS is the story of a young Irish sailor who quits the sea to follow the gleam of gold in the hills of Nevada. Mr. Mason is the sailor, and he paints a red-blooded picture of his two years in that wild country where men made money fast and spent it in like manner, and died standing. The author emerged from the hills poorer than when he arrived. On the night he left he played his last $5.00 for chips and won $7,500, with which he made off at once for San Francisco and the sea. He was caught in the earthquake there, on his arrival, and lost his money in the ruins. Penniless he finds a ship and bids goodby to the land, to seek for gold thereafter in the setting sun.

His story is a vivid one and of interest today when men are going to Nevada again to repan the old gold-streams, as a better and more hopeful way of living than standing in bread lines. The most delightful part of the book deals with Peppermint, a twenty-year-old, deaf and eccentric white mule who had known nothing but kicks and beatings and so distrusted all mankind. Wished on the author, the mule became his best friend and drank beer with him, and coffee in the morning, and was not averse to an occasional jolt of good whisky. The mule becomes as beloved a "character" as the donkey in James Stephens's "The Demi-Gods."

Mr. Mason, though widely known for his many books about the sea, all lusty and refreshing tales, should be remembered also as the author of the charming Irish fairy-tale for children, "The Wee Men of Ballywooden," which proves him one of those rare and gifted men who, while active in the greater welter of life, can still sail with the fabled argosies of the mind.

THOMAS F. HEALY.

Tenor and Painter

Mirror for Toby, by Cecily Halleck. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.00.

BECAUSE of a self-imposed vow which became an impediment to marriage, Toby, after finding true love, turns to religion in search of the meaning he must give his life. This pilgrimage is the basis of Miss Halleck's very fine and very unusual novel, a Catholic Book Club selection. For her as well as for her hero, faith must be made the force by which all human destinies are ordered. It was not sufficient for Toby that he enjoyed worldly success, international fame and acknowledged genius. His mystic and religious strain impelled him to correlate these with the divine reason for his being.

The author has not neglected the implications of her theme's profundity, yet she has invested it with such detail and clever characterization that interest never flags. Only when she endows Toby with eminence as both a tenor and a painter does she overtax credulity. The quietness of that real climax in which Toby is finally led to discuss his real problem is a fine example of artistry and a passage which, of itself, would lift the book into a high class. Incidentally this discussion provides a solution which comes as naturally as ripe fruit falling from its stem. For the guest master at the Carthusian monastery unhesitatingly pronounces that Toby's vow was the result of evil, not good: "It is the destructive power which is constantly working to disorganize and destroy all that is constructed. . . . The action of God is gentle and of infinite patience."

JOHN GILLAND BRUNINI.

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Briefer Mention

The Life of William Blake, by Mona Wilson. New York: Robert O. Ballou. $3.50.

THE FIRST edition of Miss Wilson's book was issued by the Nonesuch Press in a format appealing to those who have a taste for fine books or money to buy them. It is now offered minus notes and other appendages, for the benefit of the common people. One sincerely regrets this decision. The work is too well done ever to be popular in the wider sense; and the poorer students and teachers who would appreciate it will miss greatly the material omitted. Yet even so this biography is worth praising. It is carefully, sensibly and pleasingly done. The pertinent biographical details always turn up when one wants them to, and nothing of importance has been ignored. But the real value of the book lies in the reasonableness of its observations and distinctions. Miss Wilson never forgets that one's duty to the human great is to write their story splendidly, but yet with a pen dipped into the relativity which is brewed of all earthly things.

Changing Horizons, by Geoffrey Johnson. London: C. W. Daniel Company. 5 shillings.

MR. JOHNSON is an interesting young poet, some of whose lyrics have appeared in this magazine. Like Mr. Blunden, he is attracted naturally to rural themes; and like Mr. Belloc, he can blend social criticism with genuine poetic feeling. The present volume (the writer's second) also contains some delicate, sincere religious poems. Often the phrasing of his verse is interesting, as in these lines:

> "Night drops between, in cubes of solid blue,
> The red rectangles of the working shops."

But too frequently Mr. Johnson, who is still on the way to maturity, permits a fine rhythm to wear itself flat, as when a stanza suddenly becomes this: "Were singing in my head the blessed boon of bread." If he can rise superior to these lapses, he should become a really engaging writer.

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